THE OFFICIAL SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

ISSUE 2

DECEMBER 95

£2.75



VIRTUA COP

WORLD'S FIRST REVIEW!

YOUR LAST CHANCE TO WIN **FREE** SATURN GAMES FOR A YEAR!
see page 48

VIRTUA FIGHTER 2

The ultimate conversion?
See our EXCLUSIVE review!

FIRESTORM

Shoot to the skies with Core's explosive adventure!

No postcards? Ask your newsagent.

WITH: WORLD CUP GOLF KING OF THE FIGHTERS VIRTUA FIGHTER 3 TOH SHIN DEN LEGEND OF THOR SEGA RALLY HI-OCTANE CYBER SPEEDWAY FIGHTING VIPERS X-MEN

4x4 + anarchy = canyon shredding kill fest.



It's 26 levels of car-to-car combat. Customize buffed monster-stompers with trick engines and air-grabbing jump jets.





Hate cheesy acting? Watch two trash-talkin' jerks rip on the gratuitous video.



With our unique, head-to-head 2 player game, grind a pal's ego into the asphalt. It's cruel. But there ain't no 2nd place.

Get a load of **Off-world Interceptor™ Extreme**, the chaotic death-capade featuring wicked 4x4s and a blood-thirsty arsenal. Red-line across the galaxy's most intense, **32-bit** texture-mapped terrain, switching on the fly between **cockpit** and chase view. Careful, though. Grabbing **massive air** could crush a kidney. Or two.

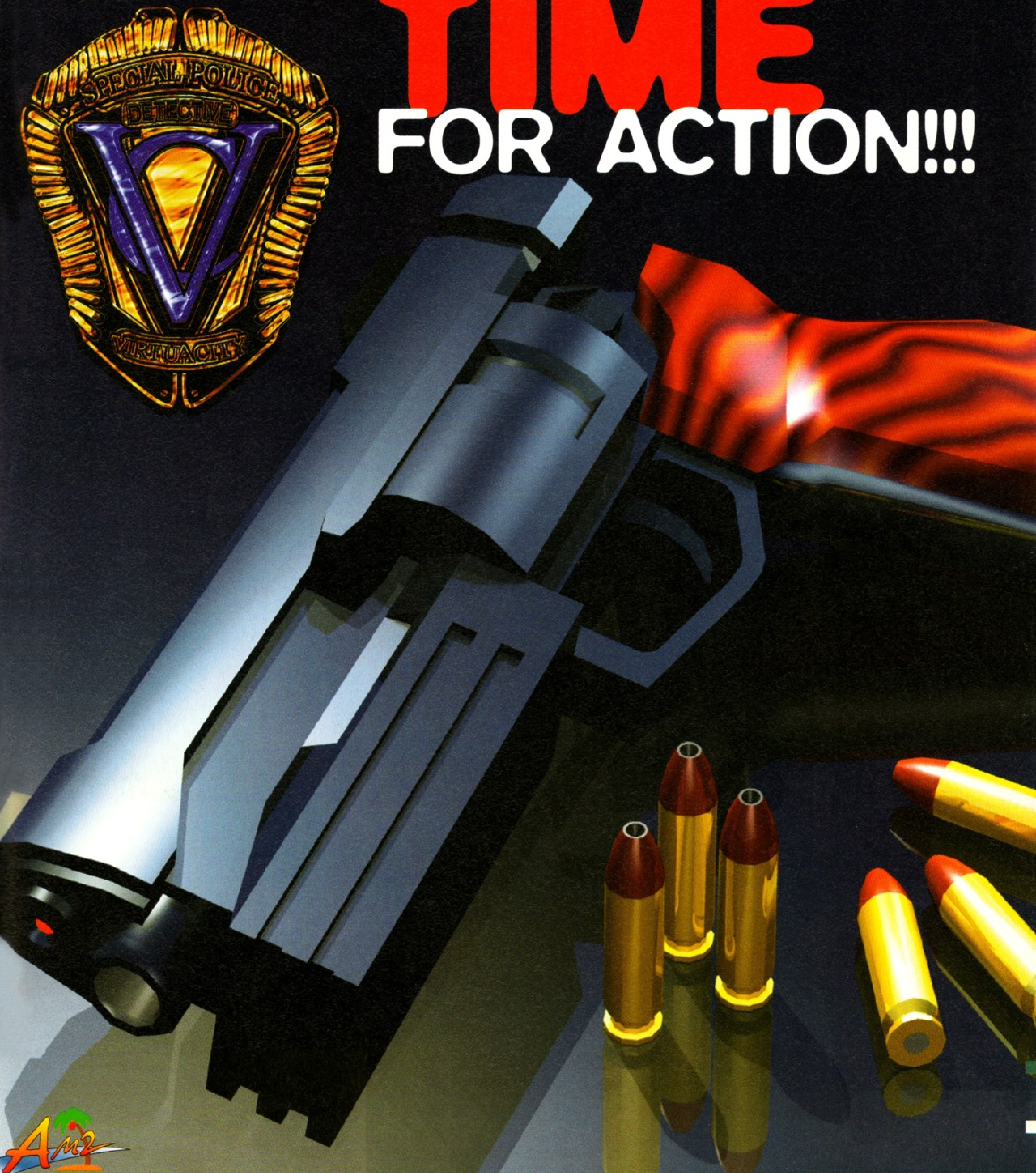


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CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

Available on the Sega Saturn™ game console.

COCK THE HAMMER... TIME FOR ACTION!!!



ARTWORK © SEGA™ JAPAN

SEGA SATURN™ MAGAZINE

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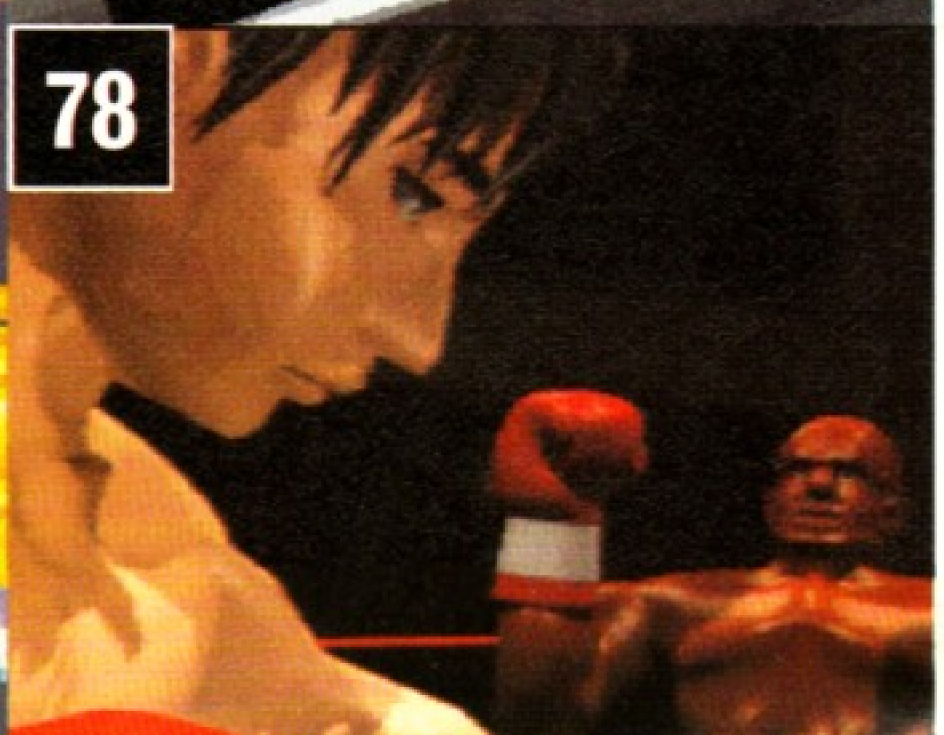

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COVER STORY:

VIRTUA COP 34

Even we were surprised when Virtua Cop arrived at the office, finished and ready for an assault on the UK games market. We weren't expecting it to be finished for another month you see. But finished it is, and as you'd expect from AM2, the final result is absolutely brilliant. However, before you rush on down to the shops to buy a copy of the game, let us sing the praises of it for you in our six page showcase, followed by the definitive review on page 70!

SHOWCASES

VIRTUA FIGHTER 2 40

Last month we brought you an in-depth look at the development version of the title, and this month we bring you a feature on the finished game! Luckily, this is by far and away the most innovative combat title ever seen on a console, and just to prove it, we bring you eight pages on every aspect of the game. And don't forget our exclusive review too!

FIRESTORM 52

Core Design Wowed Mega-CD owners two years ago when they unleashed Thunderhawk on an unsuspecting public, and they look set to do it again with this Saturn version of events. Ground breaking graphics, lightning-fast gameplay and over 30 missions – it's all in there...

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM 56

Converted from the top arcade title, X-Men looks set to take Saturn owners by storm when it's released officially in February. We take a look at a 50% complete version of the game, and reveal essential gameplay details.

JVC BOXING 60

It's always difficult to convert this sport into a game format, but JVC have definitely come up with the goods in this ace boxing tournament. We bring you all the game details in this four page feature.

RALLY UPDATE 64

AM3 are putting the final touches on this mighty title and although the review version isn't quite ready yet, there's plenty of new features to show off, including the infamous ghost car and the now-finished two player mode.

FEATURES

SKY TARGET 18

Everything that Wing Arms should have been, Sega's arcade title Sky Target should be in the arcades any day now. We take a sneak look at the game and ponder on the inevitable Saturn-release announcement...

FIGHTING VIPERS 20

Unveiled at the Japanese JAMMA show a couple of months ago, Fighting Vipers is coming to the UK soon, and we have all the details on the game's background, plus a word or two from guru Yu Suzuki himself!

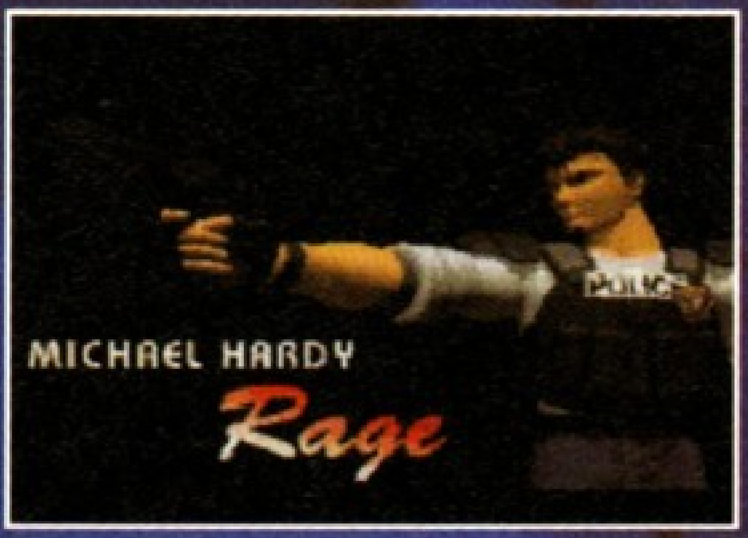
TIME ATTACK COMPETITION 48

This is your LAST CHANCE TO WIN FREE SATURN GAMES FOR A YEAR! Plus, you'll get the chance to see just how crap your times are on Daytona in comparison to people who are really good at it.

THE FUTURE OF THE SATURN 50

We all know that the Saturn has come in for a lot of bad press recently, and we're here to set the record straight. Find out why buying a Saturn is the only choice when it comes to consoles and discover its many hidden talents.





SEGA SATURN™ NEWS

ROUND TWO! FIGHT!

Look, we all know that Sega have had their problems this year. They released the Saturn to a barrage of abuse, with next to no TV advertising and a whole load of propaganda from Sony. But, things have really changed around in the last month. Anyone who's seen our brilliant preview video should need no more evidence to prove that Sega have what it takes when it comes to bringing the best games into your home, but now that the Christmas campaigns have begun, we really are beginning to feel the might of Sega. In fact, Sega have always said that they would never match the TV marketing spend that has been lavished on the Playstation, but from what we've seen, they don't even need it. The games speak for themselves and even third party developers are clambering over each other to make peace with Sega and get their games out on the machine first. Street Fighter Alpha will be out on Saturn before Playstation, as will X-Men Children of the Atom, FIFA Soccer, Thunderhawk 2, Darkstalkers – the list is endless. Plus we've just received the news that all of Psygnosis' top titles will be out on the Saturn within the next couple of months. So when Sega's European product and marketing director Barry Jafrato says that 95% of all Playstation games will appear on the Saturn – he means it. And don't expect to see cruddy conversions either – from what we've heard the Saturn version of Wipeout is every bit as good as the Playstation's.

If you haven't bought a Saturn, this news alone should make your mind up to go out and get one, and if you already own one – congratulations! You have, without a doubt, made the right decision.

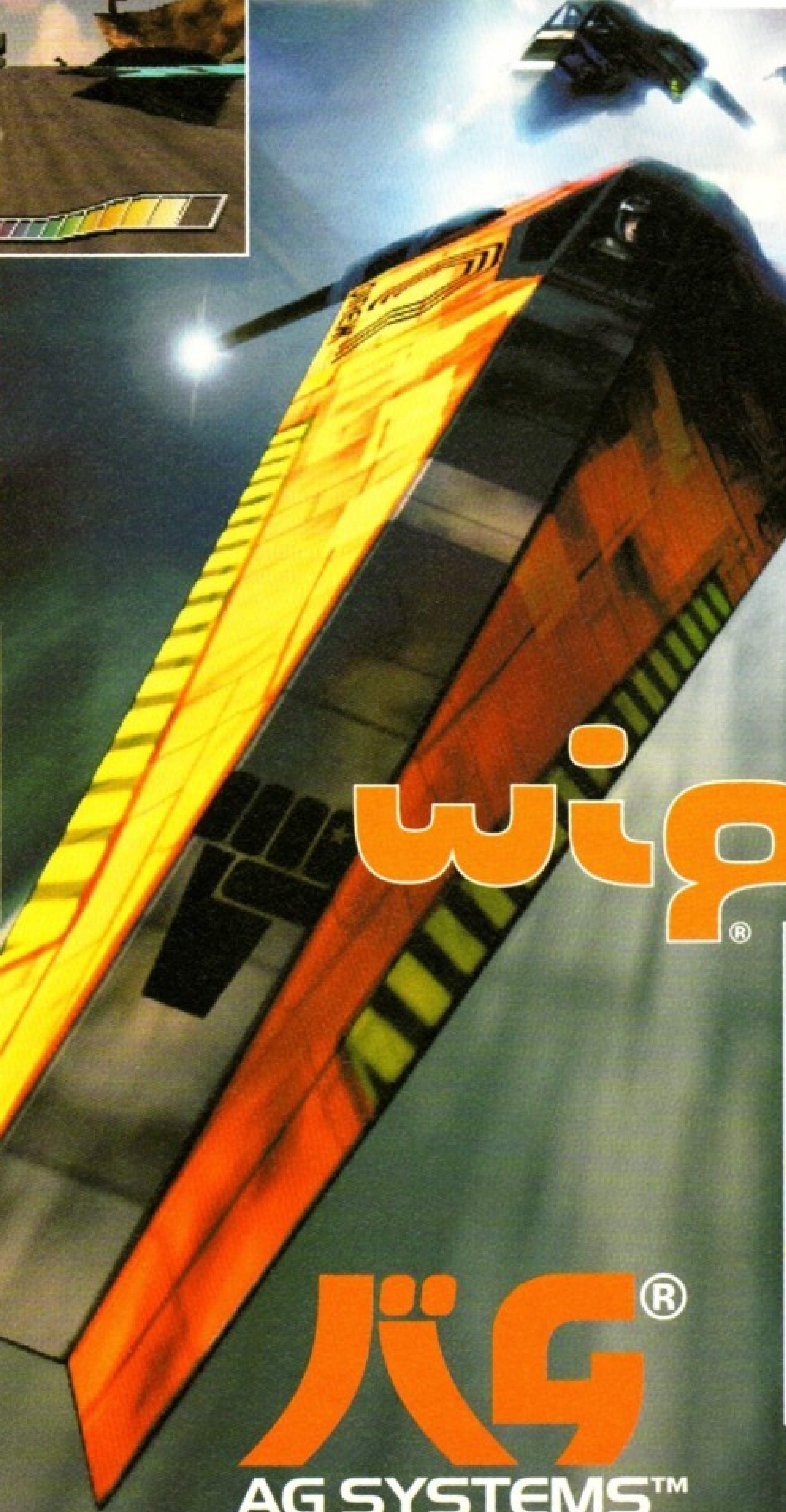
Enjoy this issue,

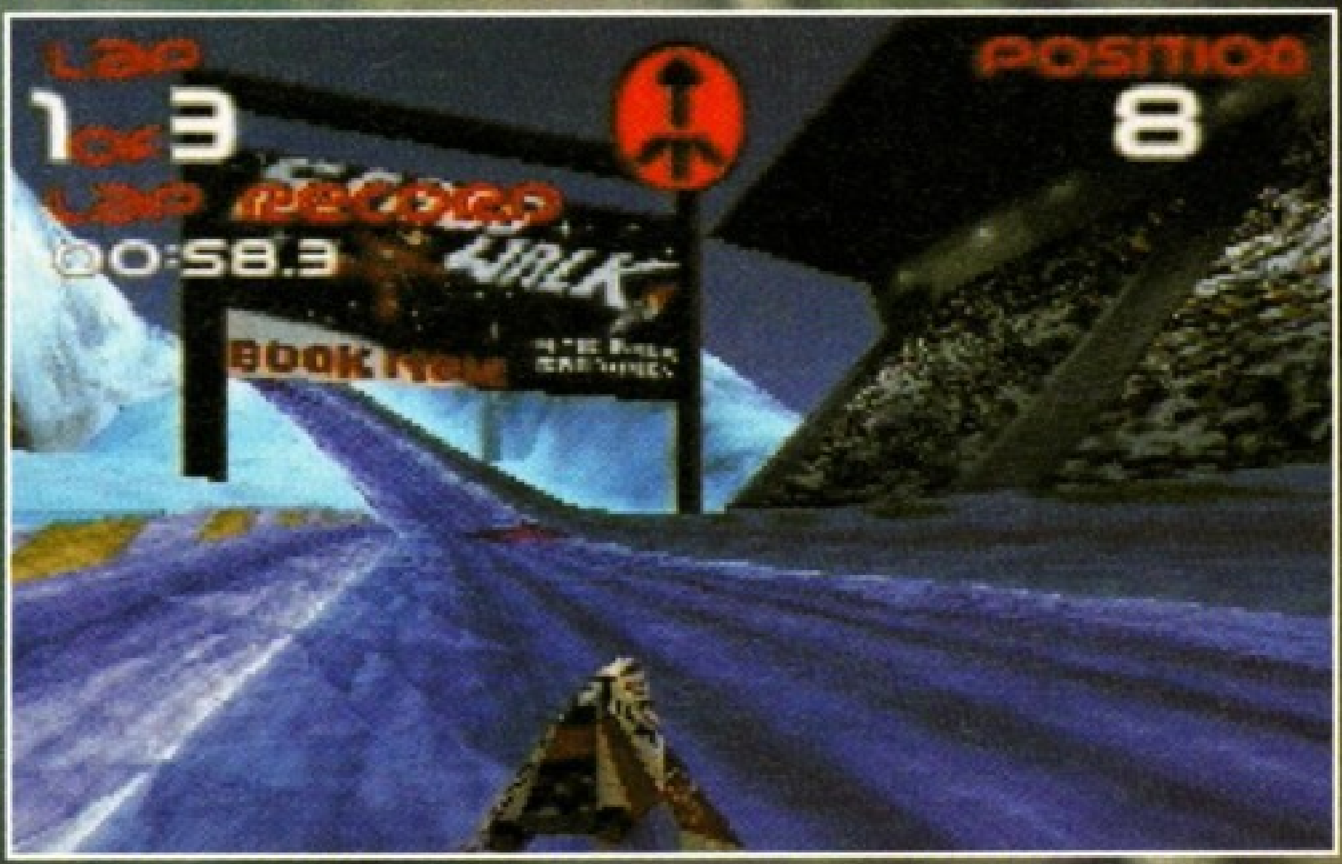
Sam Hickman, Editor











Wipeout is probably the most heralded game on the Playstation to date, and within mere months it will be on your Saturn too! Kind of makes the Playstation a bit redundant, doesn't it?

SHOCK NEWS!!! WIPEOUT TO APPEAR ON THE SATURN!!!















Just as Sega Saturn Magazine was going to press, it was, er, shall we say, *discovered* that most of Psygnosis' games developed for the Sony Playstation will be making their way to Saturn in the early months of 1996! The official line on this is that the games WILL NOT be published under Psygnosis' own label (currently affiliated completely with Sony) as they have an exclusive contract with Sony Interactive. However, it is quite likely that the titles will be developed by Psygnosis (although Wipeout is currently being developed in Japan) and published under another name.

So, this means that you could be playing an awesome conversion of Wipeout on your Saturn as early as March. Industry sources have already witnessed the game in action and it's already in a fairly advanced state – early indications are that it will be every bit as good as the Playstation original. Of course, if games such as Wipeout are due for the conversion treatment, it's also fair to say that most of Psygnosis' other titles will also appear on the Saturn too. This includes hits such as Destruction Derby, 3D Lemmings and Discworld , all of which are out in the shops now, as well as Adidas Power Soccer, Crazy Ivan, Sentient and Assault Rigs, most of which are going through the playtesting process (on the Playstation) at the moment.

Naturally, anyone who's expressed even a passing interest in the Playstation will be aware that the previously mentioned titles are among the most exciting and innovative games that Sony has to offer (in fact, it's ALL they have to offer in terms of ground-breaking gameplay) and seeing as you'll be experiencing brilliant conversions of these AND other company's games such as Namco's Ridge Racer and Tekken (all being well, of course), it raises the valid question that Sony Interactive may not quite have the 32-bit war well and truly sewn up after all. In fact, if you can get all of these brilliant games for the Saturn in the near future (and we are talking mere months here), you might be wondering whether it's worth the bother shelling out three hundred odd quid for Sony's Playstation at all...











Destruction Derby is another Psygnosis title that could be appearing on the Saturn, although no official statement has been made regarding the game yet. However, it's fairly safe to say that you'll be seeing it next year. When you combine games like these with the might of Sega Rally, Virtua Fighter 2, Manx TT and Fighting Vipers (none of which will appear on the Playstation EVER) you'll have to admit that the future is looking very bright indeed for Sega.







It's even possible that newer Psygnosis titles such as Krazy Ivan and Assault Rigs will be converted to Saturn. It hasn't been announced who will snap the titles up for release, but it's been rumoured that Sega themselves are after them. A poke in the eye for Sony indeed.











NEO GEO SIGN UP FOR SATURN!

Yep, previously only available to games freaks with too much money to spare, all of SNK's beat 'em up hits will be converted to the Saturn over the next few months. Saturn titles will also appear on the Neo Geo in the not too dim and distant future. This deal was clinched after SNK realised that there was a huge demand for their games to be converted on to other machines, although at the moment, the Saturn is the only machine that SNK will convert to.

Although the company won't be developing Saturn-specific games, both Fatal Fury 3 and King of the Fighters '95 will be among the first batch of games to appear on Saturn. Following these titles will be Neo Geo hit, Pulstar. It has not yet been decided whether SNK's own programmers will work on the conversions or if Sega's teams will work on the projects, but it has been revealed that the Saturn versions may contain some extra gameplay options. More news on these titles next month, when hopefully we'll be able to reveal when the games will be surfacing in the UK.



King of the Fighters '95 – coming to a Saturn near you soon!









One of SNK's most celebrated titles – King of the Fighters '95 is being converted to the Saturn at this very moment – more news next month.



All of these SNK titles should be available on the Saturn within the next year – hopefully they'll be perfectly converted too!



Virtua Fighter 3 HOT NEWS!

Virtua Fighter 3 is deep in development at the moment, and although no actual arcade shots have been released on the title yet, there's plenty of news on new characters and game progress. Head of AM2's development, Yu Suzuki, revealed that the team are working on a new Sumo wrestler-type character, although presently they are having a few problems with the jumping moves, so he may not make it to the final game. There will also be new Japanese female character, although again, no more details have been released as yet. All of the existing characters from the previous two games will also appear in the third episode, and each fighter will be updated with new moves as well as an upgrade in animation. AM2 haven't announced an official release date for the game yet, but we'd estimate that it will probably be finished in around four to six months – the Saturn version will no doubt follow a few months after that.

HOW UN-PC





Shock! Horror! Virtua Fighter Remix and Panzer Dragoon are to appear on the PC before the end of this year! What is the world coming to?

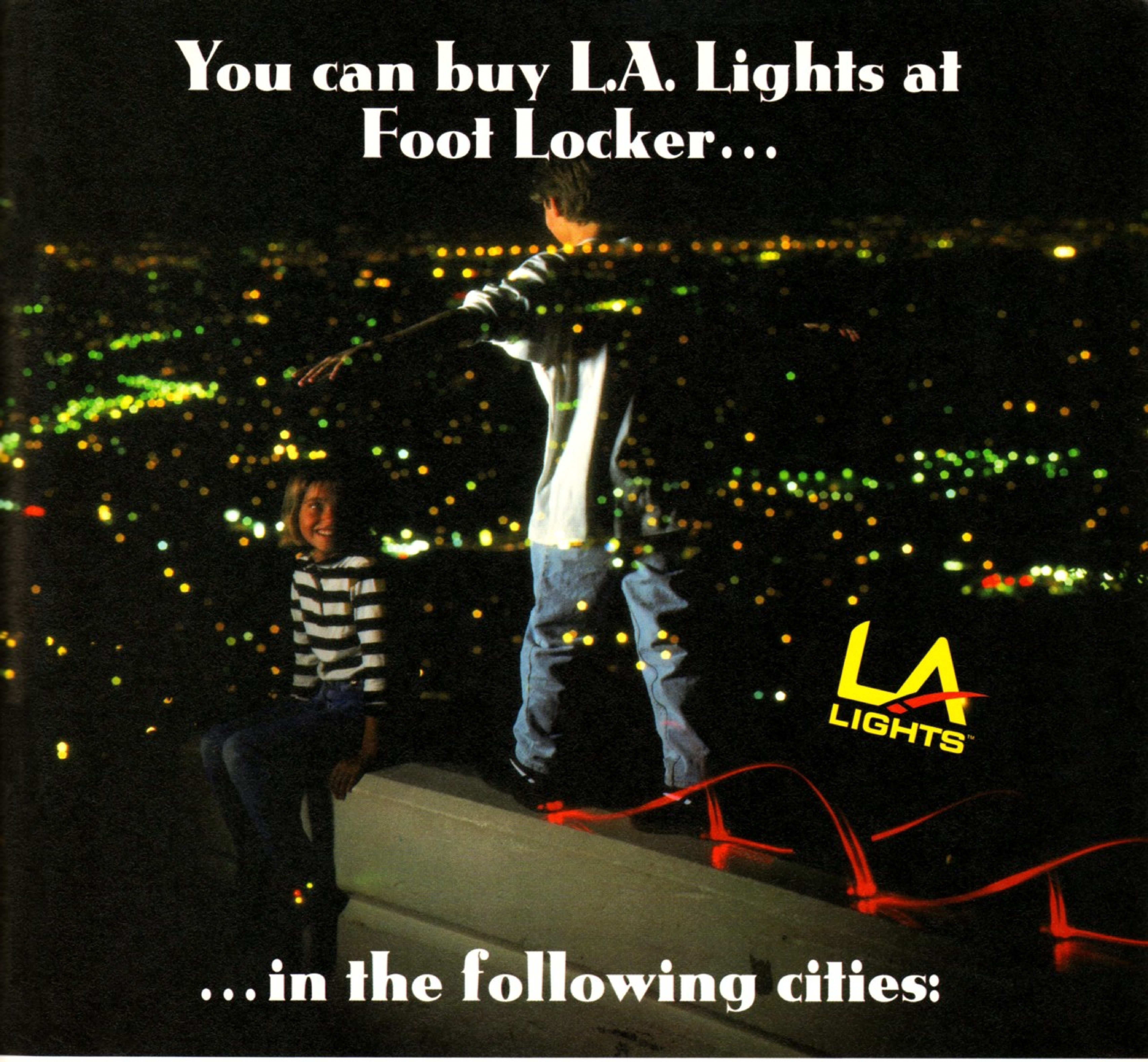
Actually, it's not all that bad really. Techno-types NVIDIA have developed a 3D accelerator card specially designed to cope with the conversions (it will only work with top of the range PCs) and the board comes packaged with Virtua Fighter Remix. Saturn joypads will also be compatible with the accelerator card.

Some of Sega's 16-bit products will also be making their way to the PC,including Comix Zone and Tom Cat Alley. Sega will also be developing specific titles for the PC, and will release all of their titles under the label Sega PC.











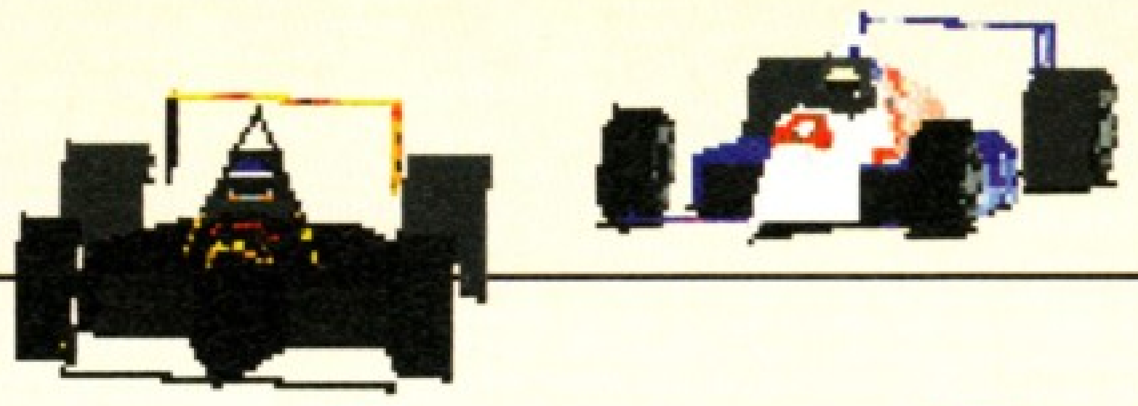
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Free with a pair of L.A. Lights

Foot Locker

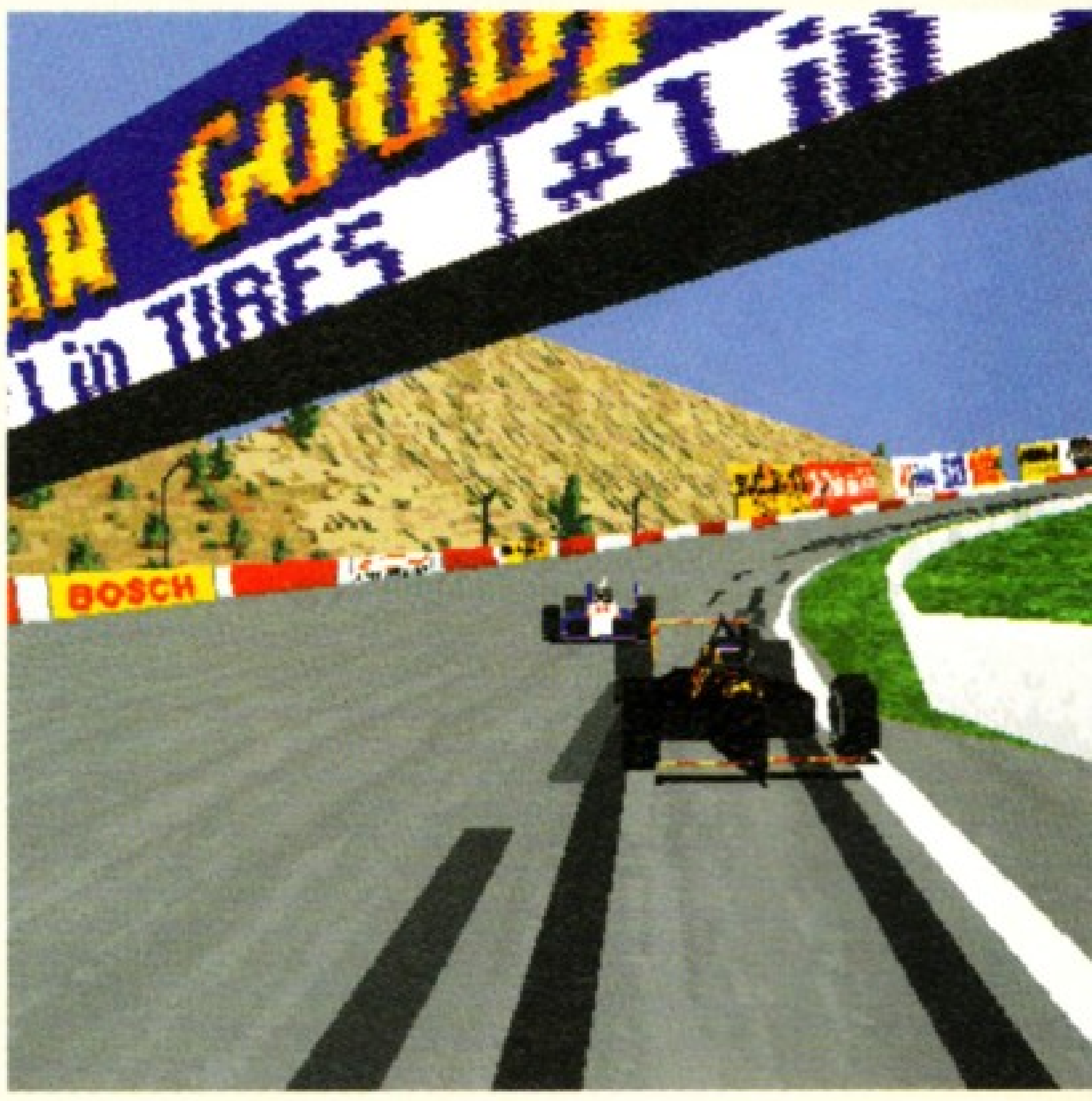


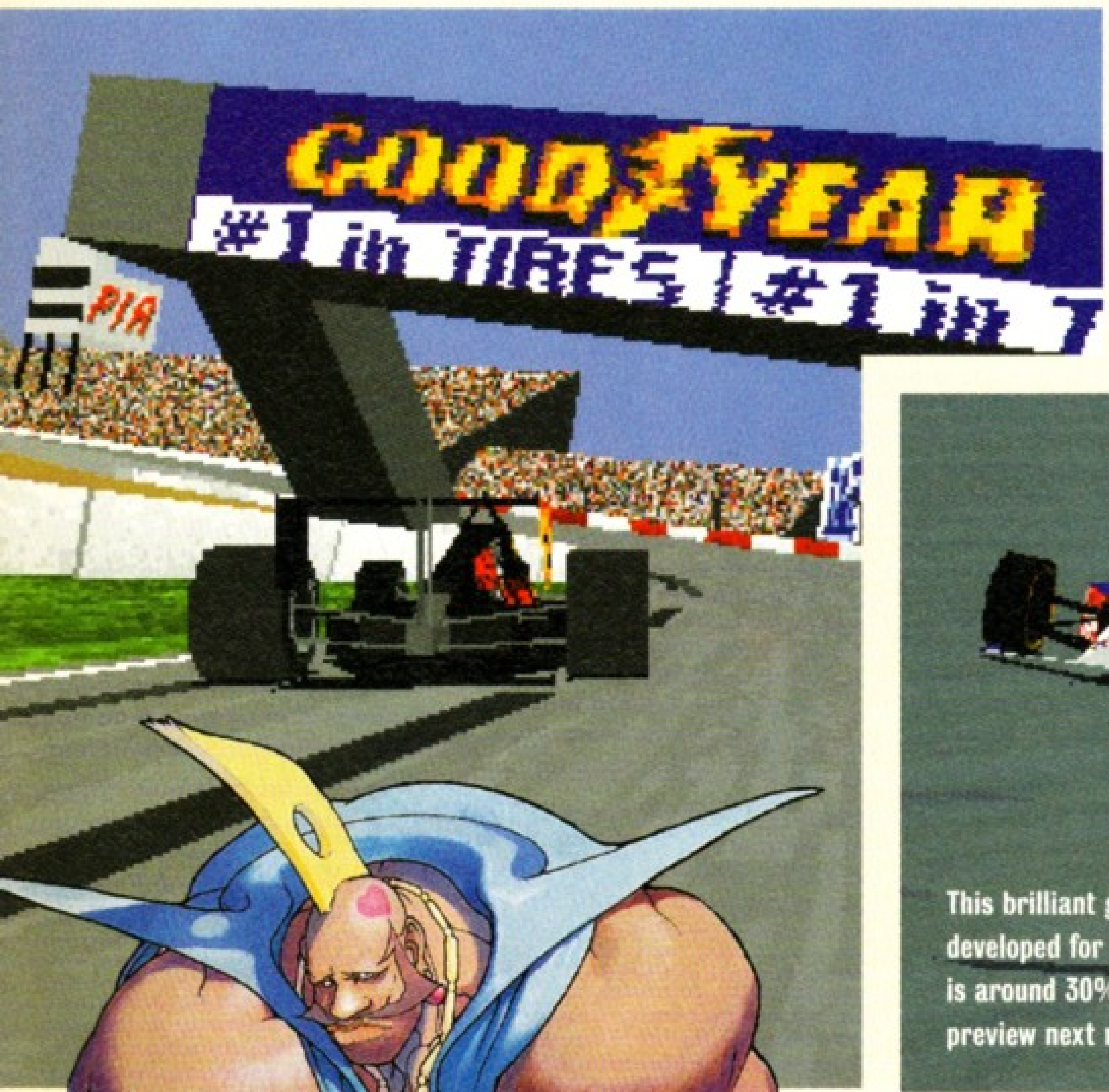


The race is on!

In addition to many other PC titles (such as Heart of Darkness), Virgin will also be bringing their smash-hit Indycar 2 to the Saturn in the early months of next year. Touted as one of the best racing titles on the PC, it's very different from Sega's own Indycar 500 arcade title (also due to appear on the Saturn) but it is of outstandingly high quality and enjoyed review marks of over 90% when it was released on PC.

The PC to Saturn conversion should be 100% faithful to the original game and may even have some added extras, although again, nothing's been confirmed yet. It's also been unconfirmed how far the programmers are into the finished product, but these are the first Saturn shots to appear on the title. More next month.









This brilliant game is currently being developed for the Saturn and at the moment, is around 30% complete. Look out for a preview next month.



Virgin sign up Capcom titles

Continuing their quest for world domination, Virgin have signed up many of gaming giants Capcom's titles for release over here. Although the titles they have will appear on both Playstation and Saturn, the Saturn conversions will appear first and among the titles on offer are Streetfighter Alpha and Darkstalkers: the Revenge (see adjacent news story). Virgin are unsure of exactly when the titles will see the light of day over here, as they're still pretty deep in development over in Japan, but they are hoping to get the PAL versions out within a couple of months of their release in Japan.

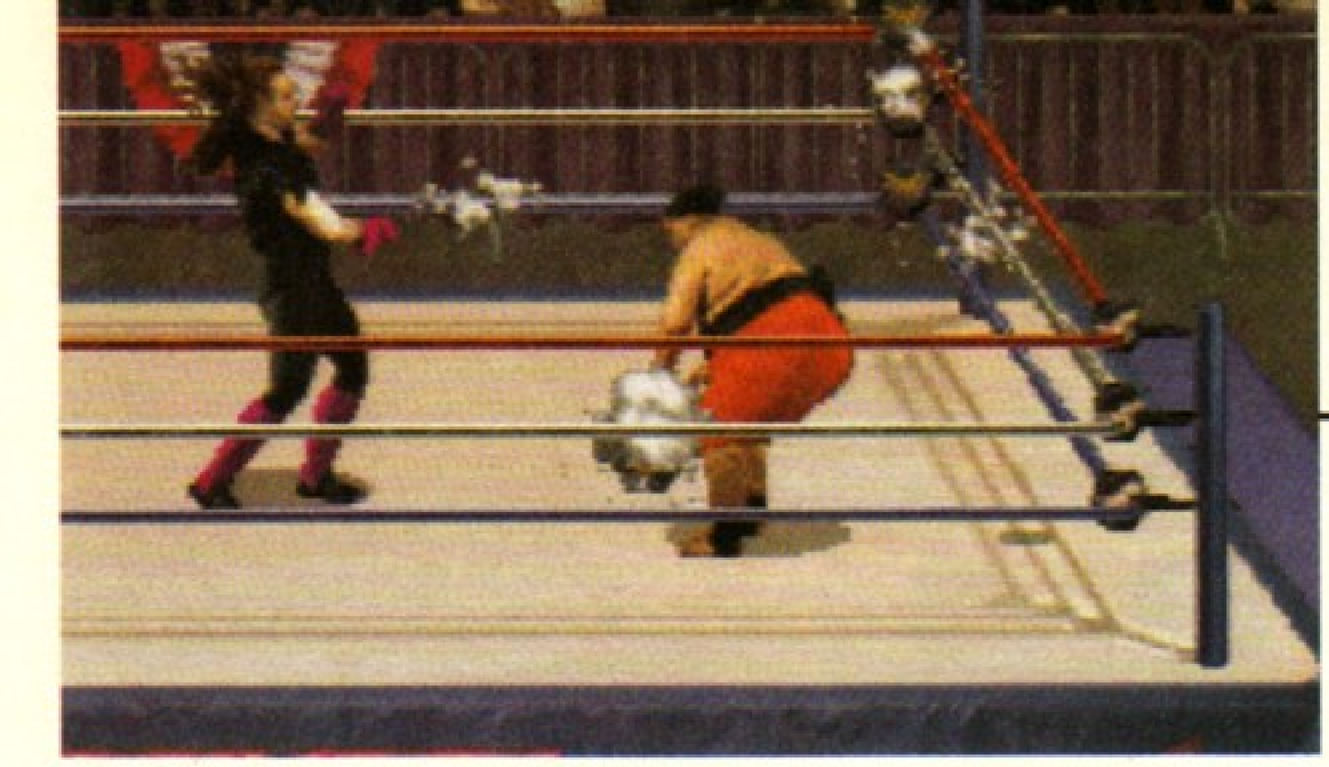


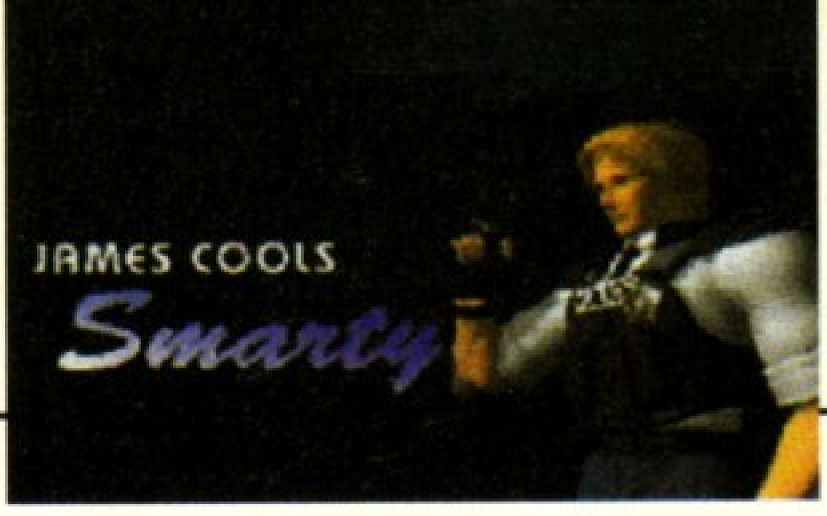


WIN! THE FIRST COPY OF VIRTUA COP IN THE COUNTRY!



Although there's little over two weeks before Virtua Cop is released in the UK, there's still time for you to enter this brilliant compo to win the first copy of Virtua Cop in the country, plus a Virtua gun to go with it. There's no special questions or anything for this compo, just send in your name and address to us by the end of December. The first entry to arrive to us will be sent the game on the same day – almost a week before all your mates will be able to go and buy it. Send your entries to VIRTUA COP COMPO, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Like now. Oh, and of you're reading this and it's too late to enter the compo – tough. You should buy the magazine as soon as it comes out!



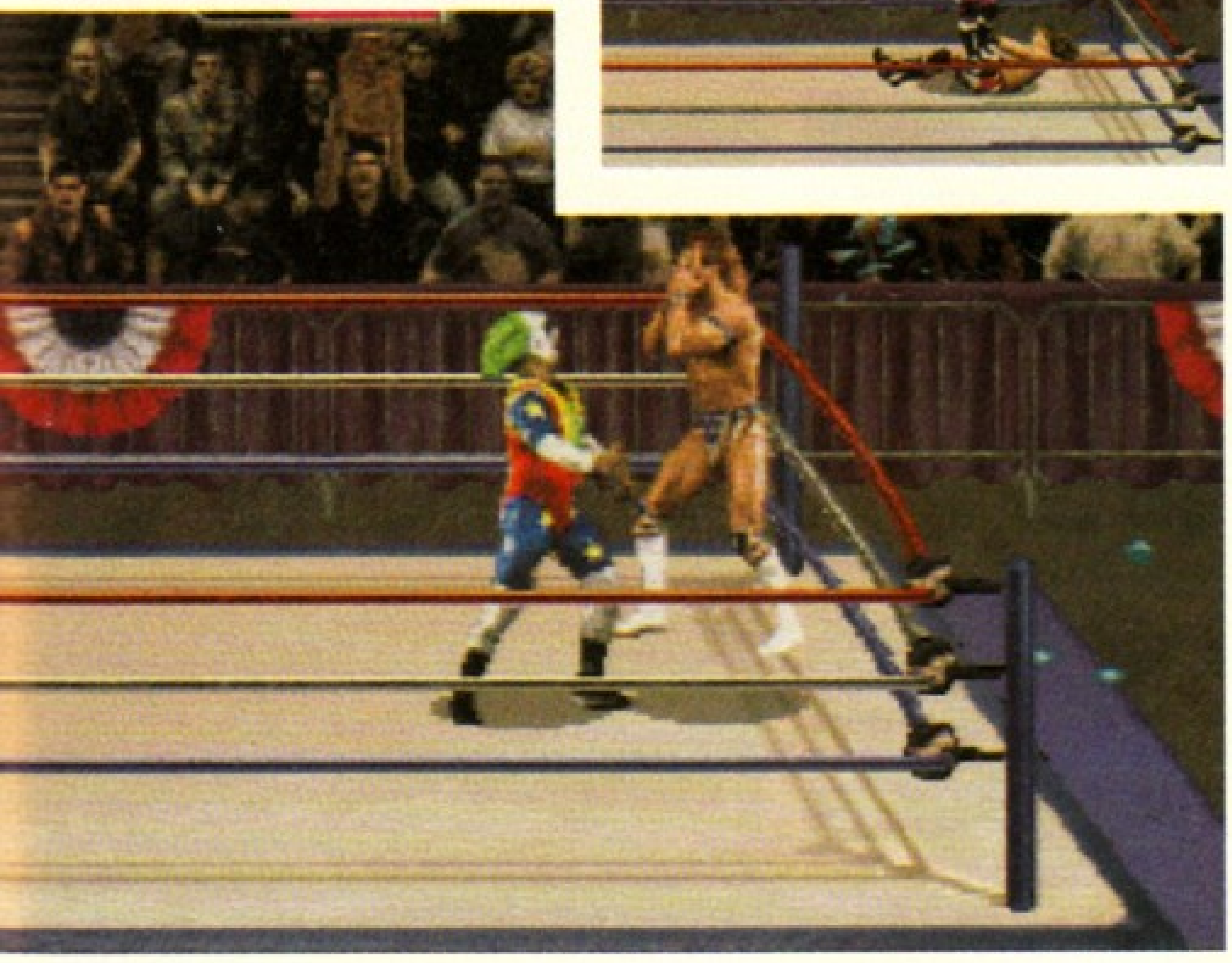


WRESTLE MAGIC!

First seen on our preview video last month, WWF Wrestlemania is set to appear on Saturn in the early part of next year. Converted from the hilarious coin-op, it will feature all the elements from the hit arcade title, and will be a multi-player game.

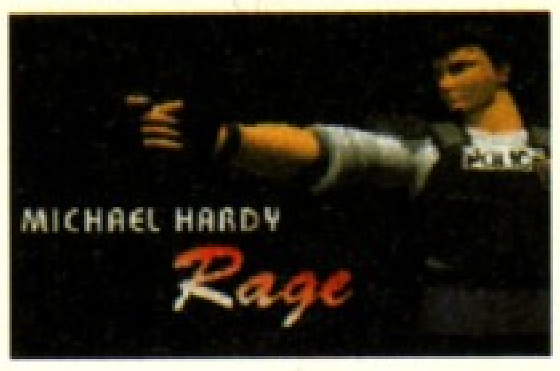
At the moment, distributors Acclaim are busy working on the PAL conversion of the title (it's already available on the Playstation – import only) and are hoping to have a finished version of the title ready by Christmas, although it won't surface in the shops until a month or so later. However, although WWF games in the past have been a bit below par, this is absolutely brilliant fun, with an abundance of multi-hit combos, and loads of special moves to learn. Great!





GET YOUR ORDERS IN NOW!!!

Yep, there's bound to be a huge demand for Virtua Cop when it's released in just a couple of weeks, and Sega have already told us that there will only be limited amounts of the game available before Christmas. However, the release date has definitely been set for DECEMBER 8th, and even better is the news that the game itself will only cost £44.99. A special game/gun pack will also be available, costing £59.99 for a copy of the game and a gun, and separate guns will cost £24.99. So, if you buy a game and gun together you'll make a saving of around a tenner. Not bad, eh?







In the hunt

Yet another of Capcom's arcade titles, Vampire Hunter (an incredibly successful beat 'em up), will be released on the Saturn towards the end of this year (Japanese street date December 29th). The title is the follow up to Darkstalkers, a huge arcade hit, and there will be a couple of new characters in the Saturn version as well as few new moves for some characters. At the moment, the title is around 70% complete, and Capcom are hoping for an arcade-perfect conversion. Expect the title to be released over here by Virgin in early '96. More news soon.





Earthworm Jim toys to hit UK!

Not only does Earthworm Jim have his very own cartoon show in the States, his owners, Shiny Entertainment, have also created a whole line of Earthworm Jim toys and other doobries. Fans of either of the games will recognise all their favourite characters in the figures, and there's even a few new ones to find too. There's been no word as to whether the figures will appear officially over here, or of how much they will cost if they do, but some-one's bound to snap them up for distribution – a sure-fire hit they will be indeed.







Cyber-Conversion

If you ever owned a Mega-CD, Snatcher will ring more than a few bells – it was probably one of the best adventures ever to appear on the format. Anyway, Konami have just announced that they will be bringing this cyber-adventure to the Saturn and although the story and gameplay will remain the same, the graphics will be treated to an update and there may be an extra episode for Saturn owners (although it's undecided at the moment). Although this probably isn't the most exciting news in the world, it does hold hope for the future, both in terms of Konami releasing games on the Saturn and also in gameplay terms. You see, Snatcher already has a sequel called Policenauts, which is currently doing the rounds on the 3DO Hopefully, this brilliant adventure will appearing on the Saturn too, although it's likely that it will probably be released by someone other than Konami if it does.





ROLLING START!

If you're still thinking of buying a Saturn, there's a special pack just released which bundles Daytona with the Saturn for £349. There you go.



HAS FIFA BEEN KIDNAPPED?

If you're wondering what's going on with the Saturn conversion of FIFA Soccer, worry no more, because we've just had news that it IS on the way and should be out in the shops by December 20th. It seemed that the programmers were working to get the Playstation conversion out first, but we've just been informed that the Saturn version is very likely to hit the shops on the same day as the Playstation version does, which indeed should be true of most EA games. This could be down to the fact that Sony have been "difficult" about allowing developers to get their games approved which has hindered developers, or it could be that the development team have got their trousers together and finished the Saturn version in time. Who knows?





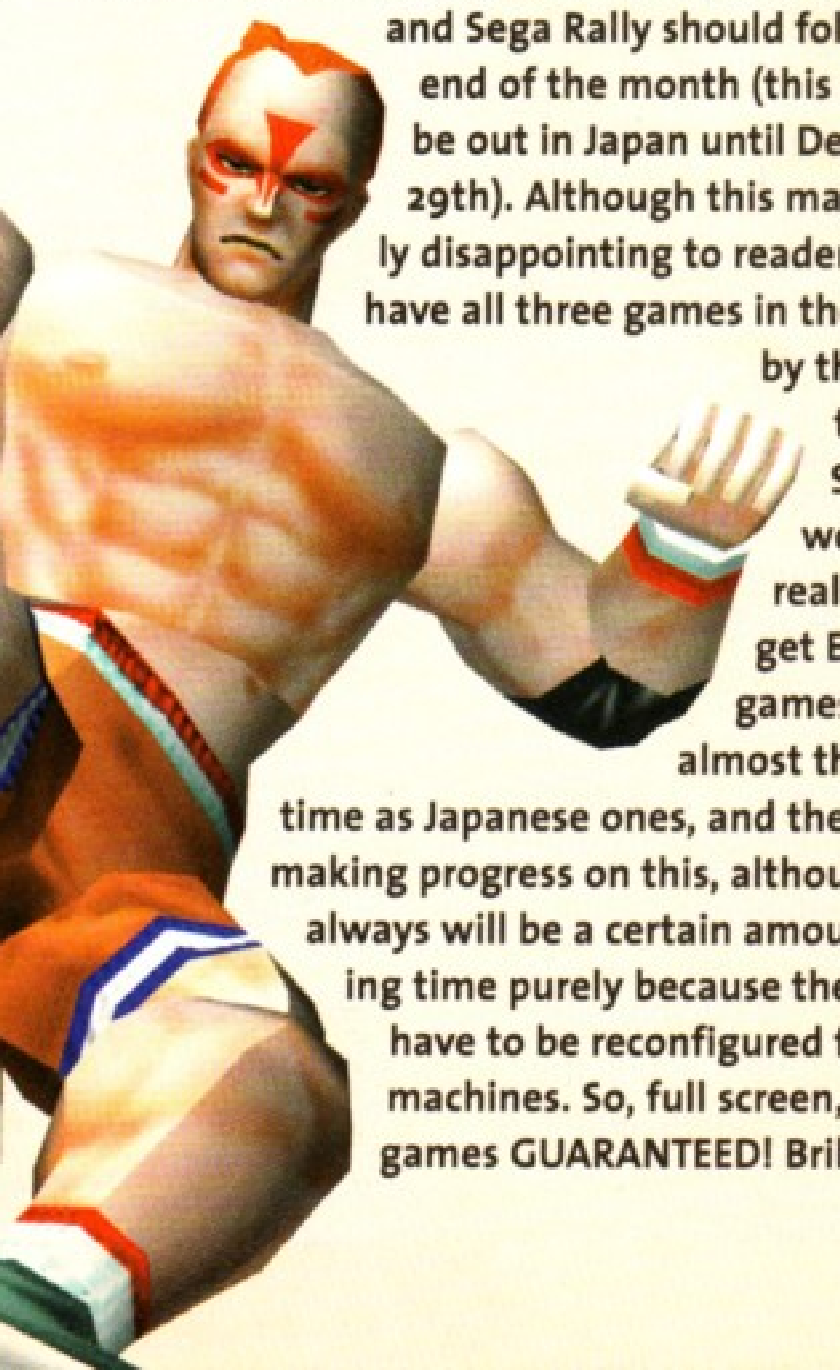
Don't worry, the Saturn version is on the way! Look out for the review in our next issue!

Virtua Fighter 2 And SEGA Rally release news!

Although Sega Europe have managed to get Virtua Cop out in time for Christmas, it's looking very unlikely that either Sega Rally or Virtua Fighter 2 will appear this side of 1995. However, fret ye not, as there's a perfectly good reason for this. After getting somewhat panned for the conversion of Daytona, Sega have decided not to release any PAL versions of games until they can get them as near to the Japanese originals as possible. And that means full screen, full speed conversions. Yep, Virtua Cop is full screen and so will all of Sega's other star titles be too. Unfortunately, this may mean that you'll have to wait a couple of extra weeks before you can go and buy the game, but Sega feel that it's better to get a perfect conversion into the shops rather than rushing the games purely to get them out in time for Christmas. So, the preliminary release date for Virtua Fighter 2 is January 8th, and Sega Rally should follow at the end of the month (this won't even be out in Japan until December 29th). Although this may be slightly disappointing to readers hoping to have all three games in their homes by the end of the year, Sega are working really hard to get European games out at almost the same time as Japanese ones, and they really are making progress on this, although there always will be a certain amount of waiting time purely because the games have to be reconfigured for PAL machines. So, full screen, full speed games GUARANTEED! Brilliant!









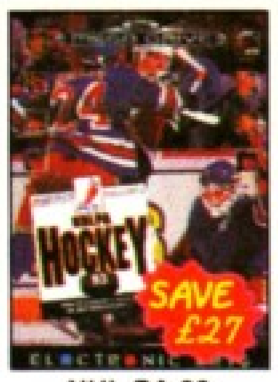
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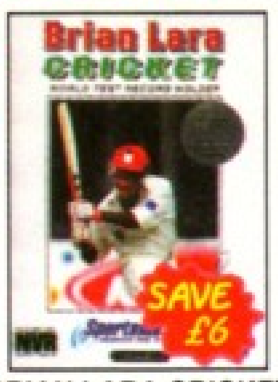
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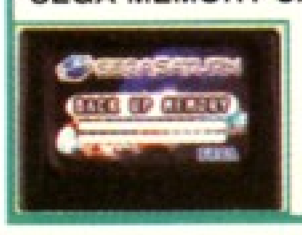
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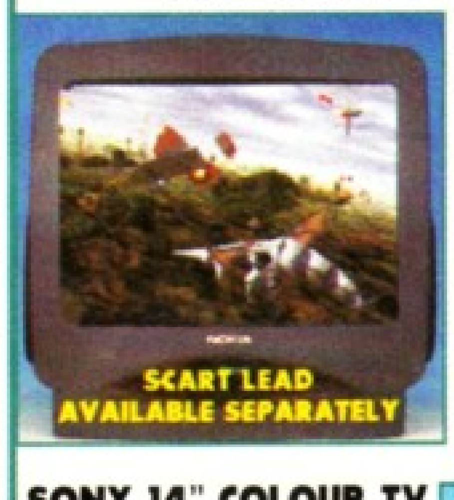
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In Development

Once again, we round up all those titles which are currently in development and may, or may not see the light of day as official releases in the UK. We'll also be taking a look at how some of the more advanced titles are changing as they get closer to Beta stage, and there's even a sneak peek at a few obscure Japanese titles that probably won't make it over here in any form.

Toh Shin Den



BY	SEGA	RELEASE	TBA

Toh Shin Den is the first title to appear on the Saturn that was previously touted as a Playstation-only game. But, although it's receiving rather a lot of attention at the moment – mainly in a can-the Saturn-handle-it kind of way, it's quite ironic, because it was never completely ground breaking in a Virtua-Fighter-kind-of-way when it was released originally anyway. In fact, Sega still aren't sure whether they're releasing it over here, but the Japanese will have it in the shops by the end of December.





Anyway, for those of you who don't know anything about Toh Shin Den, basically it's another one of those one on one fighting games. But it's not like Virtua Fighter or anything. Nope, it's more of a weapons with special moves affair. However, the Saturn will benefit from some changes to the original title – there will be an as yet undisclosed amount of new characters, making the game structure different from the original.

It's difficult to tell at the moment just how close the general Saturn conversion of Toh Shin Den will be to the Playstation original, but it's not because the Saturn can't handle the game's power or anything like that. In fact, it will be down to the developers' ability to programme the machine more than anything else. Here's a few early shots.



Looks pretty damned good, huh?



Oh look! It's Duke and Ellis! Hi Duke, Hi Ellis!







Special move festivities are the order of the day here.



Millions of moves to learn.









Legend of THOR

BY SEGA **RELEASE** TBA

If the name rings a bell, it's probably because it wasn't that long ago when Thor was doing the rounds on the humble Megadrive. And here it is, back again, in all its souped-up 32-bit glorydom. In fact, this could possibly be the very first English language RPG to appear on the Saturn (sorry, but Virtual Hydlide and Mansion of Hidden Souls don't even qualify). Luckily, it looks as though it will be of really high quality too, with the same elements from the 16-bit version ported over to Saturn, although of course, the graphics will be completely upgraded, and there's a different storyline too.

Legend of Thor was incredibly popular on the Megadrive largely due to its mix of beat 'em up gameplay, arcade action and adventure storyline, making it a more in-depth version of Streets of Rage than anything else. Which worked brilliantly, as it surely will on the Saturn. At this stage in development, there's very little of the actual gameplay to see, but Sega are confident that it will appear on the machine by around Easter time. The shots shown here were taken from a 40% complete version, but already the title is looking pretty impressive.



Coo, Thor looks much more muscley and hard than he ever did on the Megadrive. Has he grown up? Has he been taking anabolic steroids? Who knows, but you can be sure we'll be looking into it.







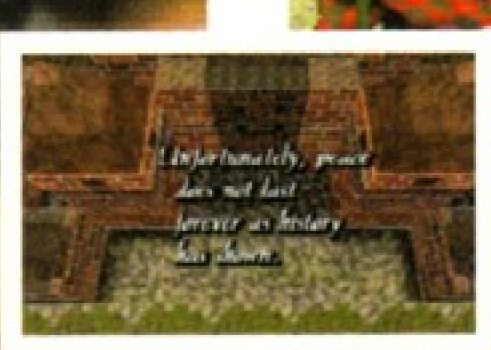
MYSTARIA

BY SEGA **RELEASE** FEBRUARY

Sorry, it's another update for this game. But hey, don't blame us, blame those lazy programming types who obviously haven't got off their behinds and bothered to do any more work on the PAL conversion. Hats off to the translators though, because at least most of the English text has now been programmed into the game. Hurrah! Now we can understand at least half of what's going on! Nothing much has changed from a gameplay perspective though, so with any luck, this will make it to the review section next month.















Puyo Puyo 2

BY	COMPILE	RELEASE	TBA

Possibly one of the most popular puzzle games ever to appear on the Megadrive, (under the guise of Dr Robotnik's Mean Bean Machine), Puyo Puyo enjoyed massive success when it was released on the 16-bit a couple of years ago. But you can't go and convert the existing title to the far superior Saturn, can you? Well, er, maybe you can. But you can't do it along with the existing Dr Robotnik licence, that's for sure. Ooh no, that's just far too 16-bit and has too many Sonic associations as well. So, out with the old tatty Megadrive stuff and in with this all-new sequel. No fat old trouts to play against (unless you're in multi-player mode of course), just loads more of the same, brilliantly addictive action. And come on, this just *has* to be released over here – surely it's something every Saturn owner would want, even if it is a really simple game concept.









JOHNNY Bazookatone

BY	US GOLD	RELEASE	DECEMBER





Readers of our last issue will no doubt remember the news story run on Johnny Bazookatone – platform hero extraordinaire, taking games into the next dimension and beyond. Or something kind of like that. Anyway, the code for the game is almost complete,and US Gold have set a release date for mid-December. The game features rendered characters and each level is themed around different music, with loads of characters playing specific parts in the game. Anyway, as we said, this is almost finished, and has been sent to Sega for approval.





BakuBAKU

BY SEGA RELEASE TBA

Developed on the Titan board by none other than, gasp, AM3, this will be appearing in both the arcades and on your Saturn in the new year. There's not really much explaining to be done here – the game speaks for itself. It's another Puyo Puyo style title, except that this time there's no cute little beans or penguins or anything – instead you have to match up monkeys, bananas and all manner of mammals into neat little rows. And that's about it, but here's some pictures from the final Japanese version anyway.













INTERNATIONAL Victory Goal

BY SEGA RELEASE TBA



Ooh dearie me. Shall we just, er, let bygones be bygones? Okay, lets put it another way. Can we forget that Victory Goal ever existed? It's just that, well, it wasn't very good was it? It may have been a minor success in Japan, but over here, people are hyper-critical of footie titles and in terms of gameplay, Victory Goal just didn't make the mark. Which is a damned shame really, because until FIFA makes its way on to the Saturn, this is the only footie title available for Saturn owners.

But hey, it's not all bad news. You see, the creators of Victory Goal were more than aware of the game's shortcomings, so they took the game's engine back to the drawing board and started to work on a new, updated version of the title. The programmers are working on new AI for the players, there's loads of new teams and the graphics have been reworked too. This is another title that's already out in Japan but at the moment, there are no plans to release it over here, as there could be more interesting footie titles on the way!

Feda

BY YANOMAN RELEASE TBA

Ring any bells? It may do if you're a SNES owner, as this appeared on the machine a fair while ago. As you can tell form the screenshots, this is another Shining Force type game with some rather lovely graphics. In fact, it's even created by the highly acclaimed Shining Force team themselves, so you can be pretty much guaranteed that the gameplay and story will be top notch.

This has already been released in Japan, but as there's a pretty heavy and complicated storyline, it's unlikely that you'd be able to understand the import version. Sega's translation department are looking at the title the moment, but as yet, it's been undecided whether the game will be released in the UK. In fact, it's fairly unlikely that it will appear, as Sega have loads of other RPGs lined up for release in Europe next year.















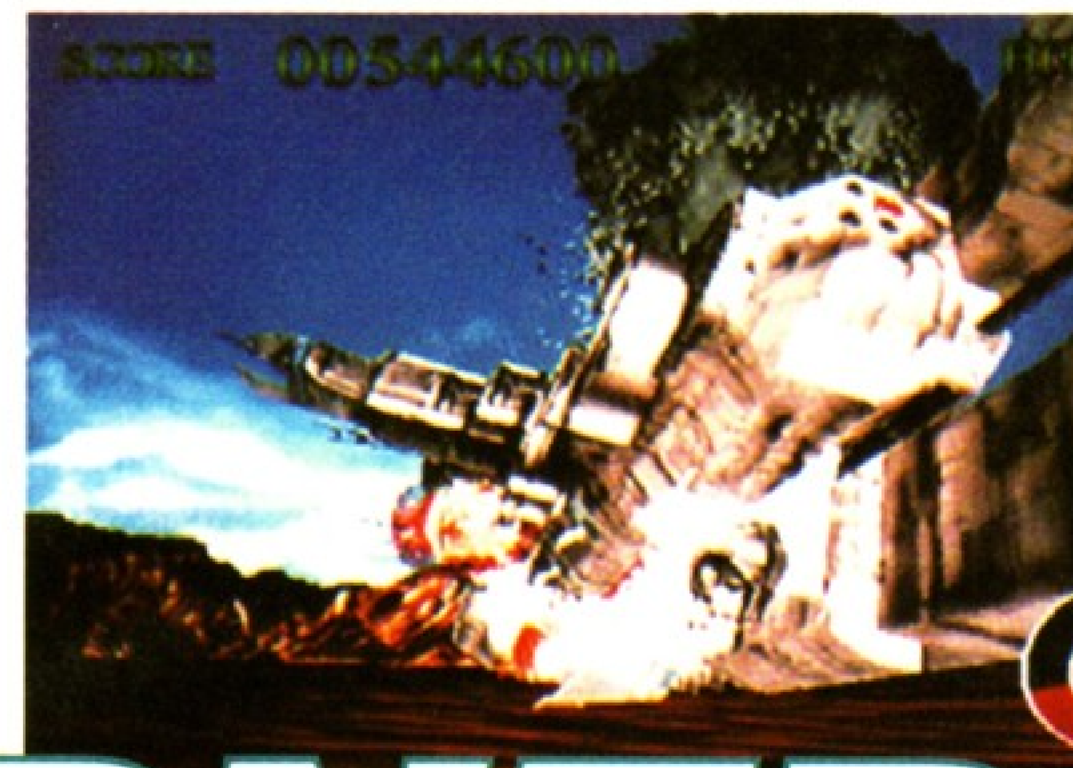
COIN OPERATED

With Virtua Cop 2, Indy 500 and the much hyped Virtua Fighter 3 all coming to the arcades in the near future, Sega's reputation as leaders in the coin-op field looks stronger than ever. And, as if in celebration of their long-standing arcade heritage, the coin-op masters have delved into their golden past as inspiration for their latest state-of-the art coin-op title.





Sky Target looks set to wow a UK audience when it's released – its dynamic graphics and fast action puts other flight sims to shame.



SON OF AFTERBURNER

If you haven't guessed yet from the pictures, Sky Target is modelled on what is possibly Sega's most famous coin-op ever – Afterburner. As with the legendary blaster of old, Sky Target is an in-to-the screen shoot 'em up concentrating on fast-paced action rather than any boring flight simulator aspects. Flying through enemy territory on a mission to destroy a stolen prototype fighter, you basically have to shoot everything in sight. Swarms of fighter planes, ground assault vehicles, enemy buildings – just blow the lot away with your homing missiles, Balkan bombs and machine gun. Yep, the spirit of Afterburner has returned!

CHOCKS AWAY!

Of course, while Sky Target might sound to be, in essence, just a rehash of Afterburner, it promises to be a far superior beast. For starters, it uses the Model 2 board and we all know what that means. Super smooth, texture-mapped polygon graphics turn a simple shoot 'em up into a realistic looking flying experience.

As you've come to expect from almost every game nowadays, Sky Target allows you to switch between four different viewpoints throughout the game, from the full-screen view, or the in-the-cockpit perspective, to exterior following-the-plane views.

Adding to this expansion of the Afterburner theme, the game also allows you to select your fighter plane from four different types of craft. There's the F-14 Tomcat from Afterburner and 'Top Gun', the more mobile F-15, the stunt fighter F-16, and the French strategic multi- mission fighter – Rafale M.



Sky Target uses Sega's innovative Model 2 board, which means super-smooth polygon graphics.



STAY ON TARGET!

Thanks to the Model 2 board's incredible graphical abilities, Sky Target pits you against the kind of enemy craft that would have had Tommy from Afterburner soiling his under-crackers. There's the usual mass of enemy fighters you can 'lock-on' to with your missile sight, but the big event of each level is The Boss! Found at the end of each stage, these monstrous enemy craft are more than ten times the size of your own plane. It's at about this point that you can experience the juddering feedback of the joystick as your craft endures 100% damage and plummets to the ground!





LOWERING LANDING GEAR!

Sky Target proved highly successful when unveiled at the September JAMMA show in Tokyo and should make it into British arcades very soon, when we'll all be able to give the game a thorough playtesting. After that, all things going well, the game could be slated for Saturn conversion, although Sega have yet to make any comment to that effect. We'll just have to wait and see.

THE DOG'S PERIPHERAL



SEGA SATURN

Sega Saturn's accessories are pushing game play to a whole new level. Especially the awesome new Video CD Card (MPEG), which allows you to watch movies and music videos like never before. These peripherals are definitely not to be sniffed at.

the GAME is NEVER Over.

FIGHT FOR



UNVEILED AT THE RECENT JAMMA SHOW HELD IN TOKYO, WAS AM2'S NEW COMBAT TITLE, FIGHTING VIPERS. ALTHOUGH THE GAME WON'T BE APPEARING IN THE ARCADES OVER HERE FOR A COUPLE OF MONTHS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE CAN STILL BRING YOU THE MOST UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON THE TITLE, AND THERE'S EVEN A FEW WORDS ON THE SUBJECT DIRECT FROM GURUS AM2!

Although Fighting Vipers is little more than 70% complete, the actual game was on free play to all punters at the JAMMA show, and all of the eight characters were completely playable. Scheduled for a December release in Japan, Eastern gamers are already going completely bonkers over the title and AM2 themselves are putting the finishing touches on the presentation – this even includes adding more moves to each character.

Anyway, if you can't tell by now, Fighting Vipers is a one on one fighting game, and it was developed using the same game engine developed for Virtua Fighter 2. Basically, it's the same game concept all round except that there's new characters and millions of new moves. Unlike Virtua Fighter there's no "ring out" option – instead the fighting arena is surrounded by a fence that fighters can be slammed into.

All of the characters in Fighting Vipers wear a suit of armour which wears out as the fight progresses. Particularly dramatic clashes between fighters are played out from three different perspectives and the degree of damage to either character will be shown alongside their strength gauge.







Honey gets to work.

INTRODUCING...

In all, there's ten fighters, and as you would expect form AM2, there's a bizarre character explanation to go with each. And here they are...

JANE



Her ambition was to join the marines, but was rejected due to a violent incident. However, she continues to fight to try out her strength.

PICKY



He started skateboarding to attract a female classmate, and uses complicated skateboarding techniques to fight.

GRACE



She is a cold but intelligent woman. She was betrayed by her lover and fights to bay the anger that lurks inside her.

LAKSHELL



A vocalist and guitarist in a rock band. He hates his father, who is a municipal council worker and fights simply for the publicity.

SANMAN



A silent and mysterious man who likes to ride a huge, remodelled scooter. He also likes the number 3.

BAN



The head of a gangster mob, Ban seeks revenge from his father who abandoned him and his mother when he was very young.

HONEY



Honey's ambition is to become a fashion designer. She is very shy until she puts on a red dress which makes her fight very violently.

TOKIO



Originally from a band of Kabuki actors, Tokio turned his back on his family and fights only for passion.





LIFE!



YU SPEAKS!

Usually far too important to be bothered with lowly press types, Yu Suzuki, Head of AM2, recently took a few minutes out to speak to Japanese journalists about the development of fighting Vipers. When asked about the board used to develop the game, he commented " They are basically the same [the VF2 and Fighting Vipers boards]. Except that the board for Fighting Vipers has a slightly faster processing speed. We are also getting a higher response to displaying more polygons, but that only has a minor effect on the overall game. The Saturn version of VF2 is almost a perfect conversion, so the team working on arcade games have to do their best to bring out the highest quality in arcade games that cannot be experienced on the Saturn."

Hmmm. Sounds like a Model 3 board could be on the way. However, Mr Suzuki seems to be holding his cards very close to his chest. " I can only see that Model 3 would be brilliant. During the Jamma Show, I found 3D to be the key word for future development. We will be able to show you the best 3D graphics on Model 3. Once the graphics are developed, the game quality would be our challenge." He also commented that "It's not a matter of can or cannot, but it is a must to develop a Saturn conversion of Fighting Vipers."

Other members of AM2 were also available for comment on Fighting Vipers and revealed to Japanese magazines more gameplay details. When probed over the difference in handling between fighting Vipers and VF2, they said, "The continuous hitting of buttons will continue the fight. Also, there will be several paths to take in terms of technique from the 2nd step to the 3rd step. The guard attack will enable the player to first guard, then fight back. It makes it possible for the the character to fight back, even though they may be cornered. We want to make this game another hit series of Sega like SNK's series of titles like Road to Victory and Samurai Spirits."







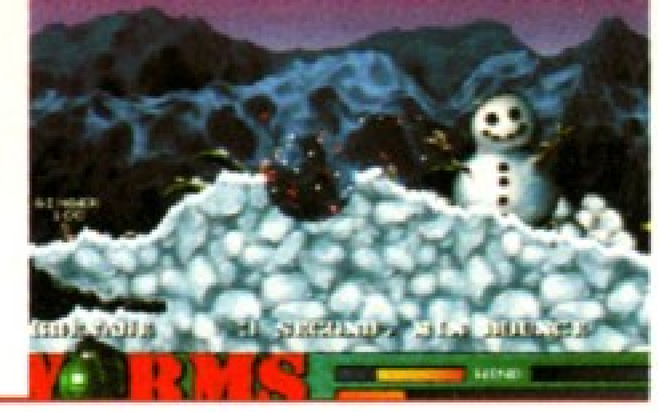




IN THE ARCADES SOON! (ISH)

Fighting Vipers is currently on test at selected arcades across the country and should be out on general release by the beginning of next year. However, look out for more news on the game over the next couple of months, as well as vital information on that all-important Saturn conversion.





BY	TEAM 17
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP

Worms. Seem to be pretty popular in videogames at the moment, don't they? Earthworm Jim has already made his second attack on the 16-bit market, and now thousands of the blighters are preparing to take over the Saturn. And if you're not careful, they might just take over your life too.

You see, Worms could very easily become the surprise hit of the year. Combining the wicked puzzles of Lemmings with simple shooting action, Worms is one of the most addictive games we've seen in ages. Why, grown men have been seen crying at the demise of their invertebrate nation, while others have been screaming with glee at the prospect of blowing ten tons of dynamite into their competitors.

Which, we do appreciate, may be a little difficult to tell from these screenshots. We have to admit that they don't exactly show the game off very well. But that's because Worms doesn't rely on the graphical content of the game to entice the player. Nope, it's all 100% gameplay here, sir. Up to four teams take it in turns to drop bombs on each other in the eventual hope that they'll wipe out their enemy's team. It's possible to build bridges, tunnel through the landscape and even bungee jump in an attempt to reach enemy worms, and a different landscape is generated every time you play the game, with a total of 3.2 billion possible game areas in all. There's also a save option enabling you to save any favourite particular landscapes, and the whole game is played under time constraints of up to fifteen minutes. If there's still worms hanging around by that time, then it's straight into a sudden death mode where each worm's life is reduced to just one point – in which case, the first team to kill a worm wins the game.

Worms doesn't rely on the graphical content of the game to entice the player. Nope, it's all 100% gameplay here, sir.

There's twenty different weapons to collect in all, and with so many different ways of playing it, it's just possible that this could be one of the most lastable games ever – it's ruthless bombing action certainly makes it a much better bet than puzzle classic, Lemmings. But, if you're after a definitive opinion, we're afraid you'll have to wait for a while. Although the game version shown here is almost complete, the programmers are still working on a few details on the title, which means it won't be completed for a couple of weeks. Next month, however, we'll definitely have the review for you.



See? Worms aren't so bad really. You know, they have their problems too, like being social outcasts, having no hair and worrying about having ten tons of load pumped into their backsides.







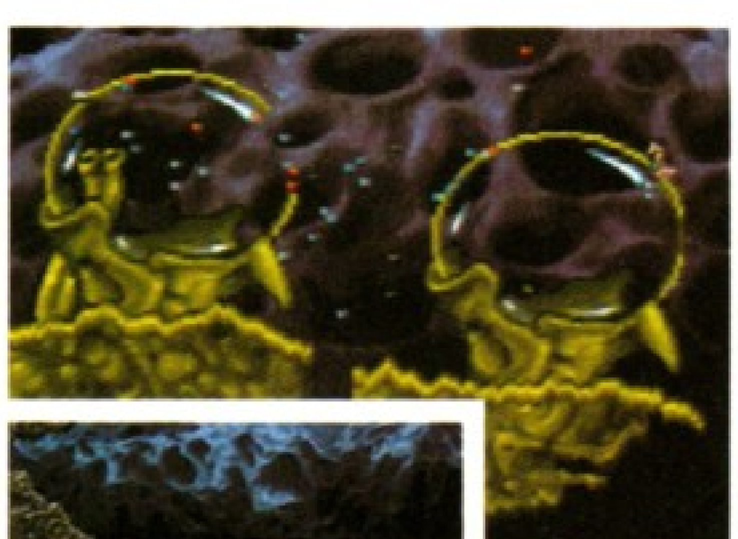




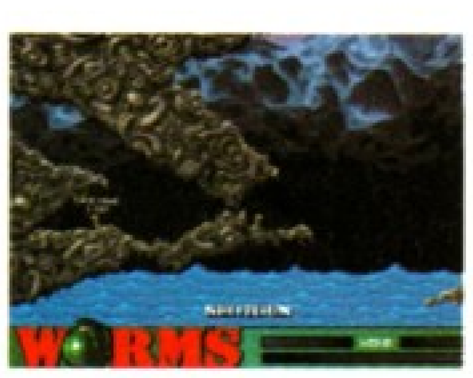


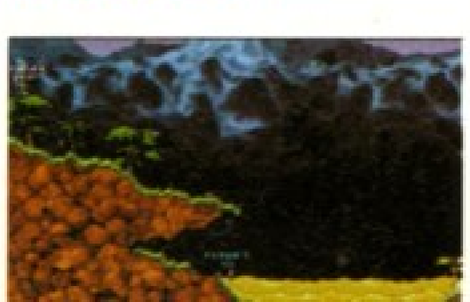


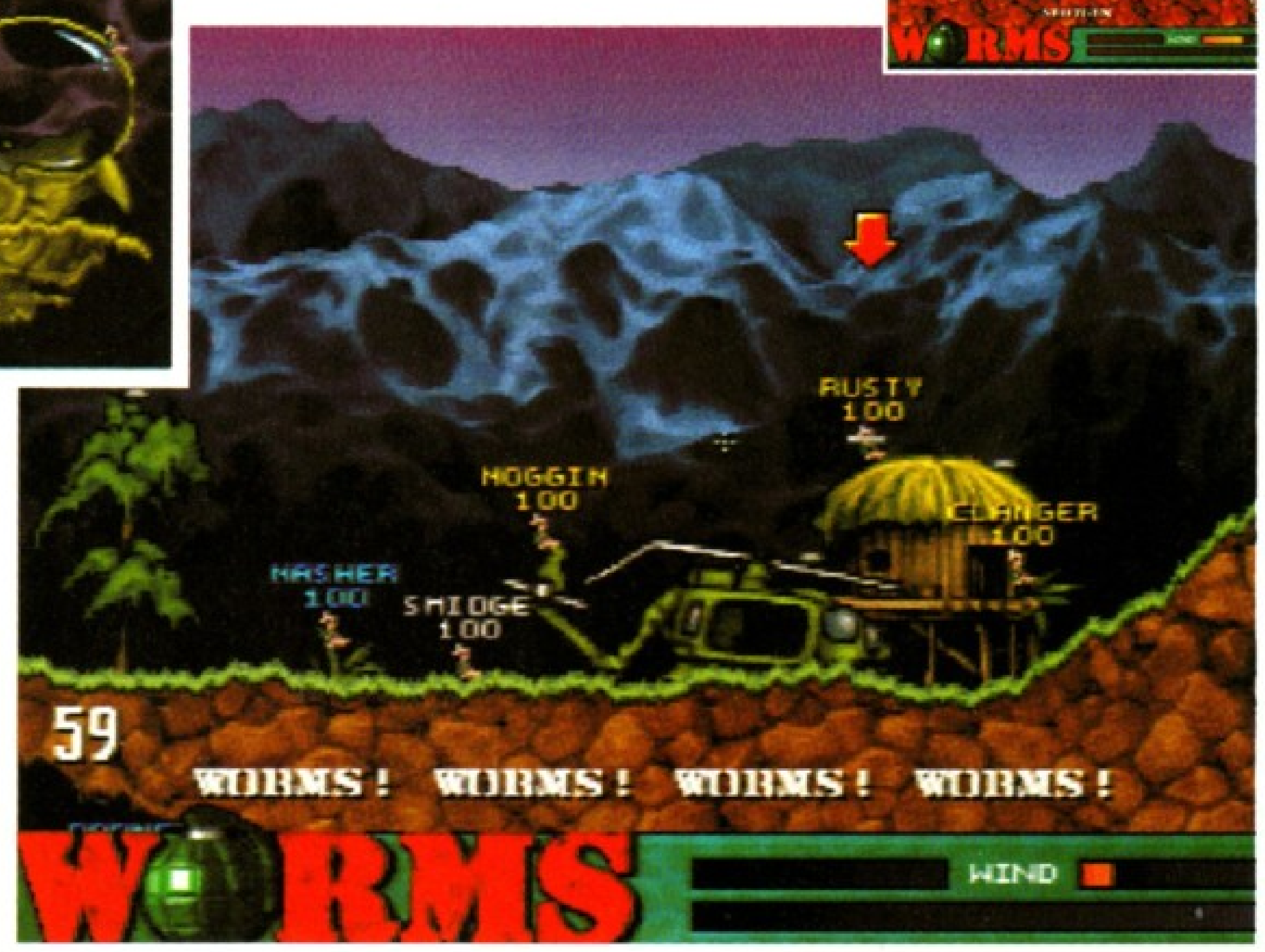
Worms. There's plenty of mileage out of that one, eh? If you like that sort of thing.



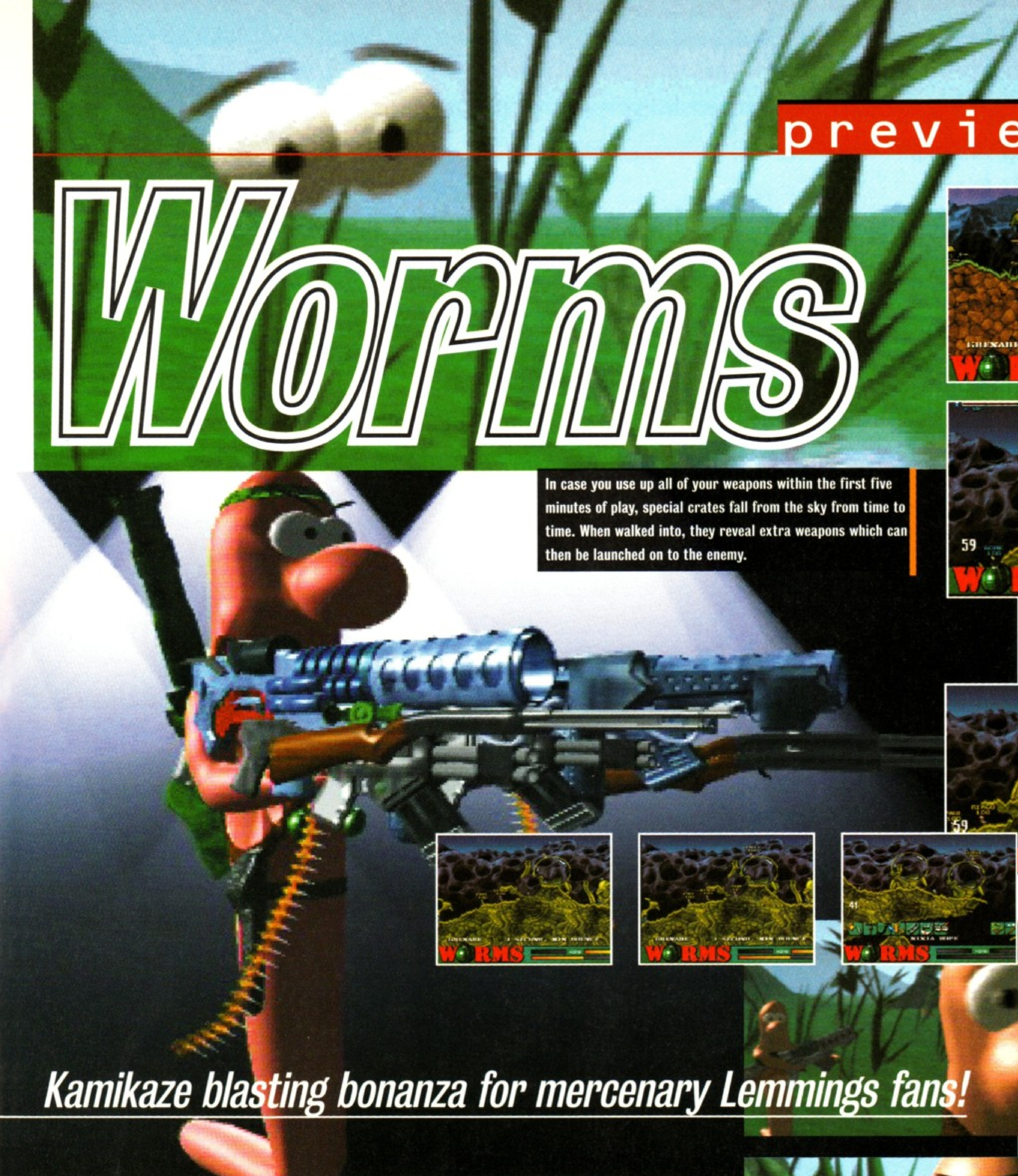








Worms

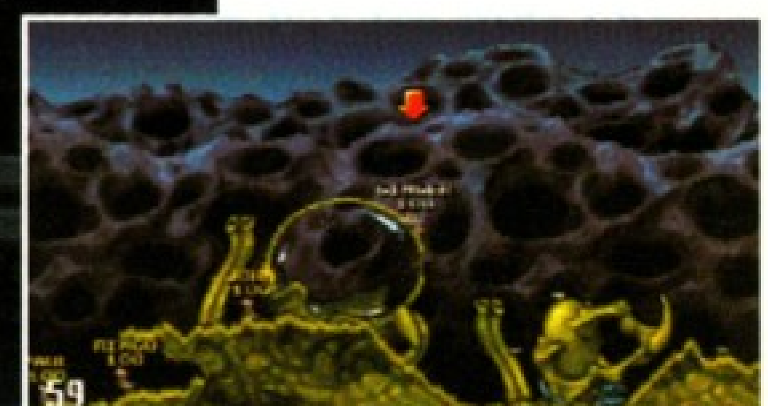




In case you use up all of your weapons within the first five minutes of play, special crates fall from the sky from time to time. When walked into, they reveal extra weapons which can then be launched on to the enemy.



Oh hee hee. You've just blown up the Beatles! Hee hee, etc, etc.



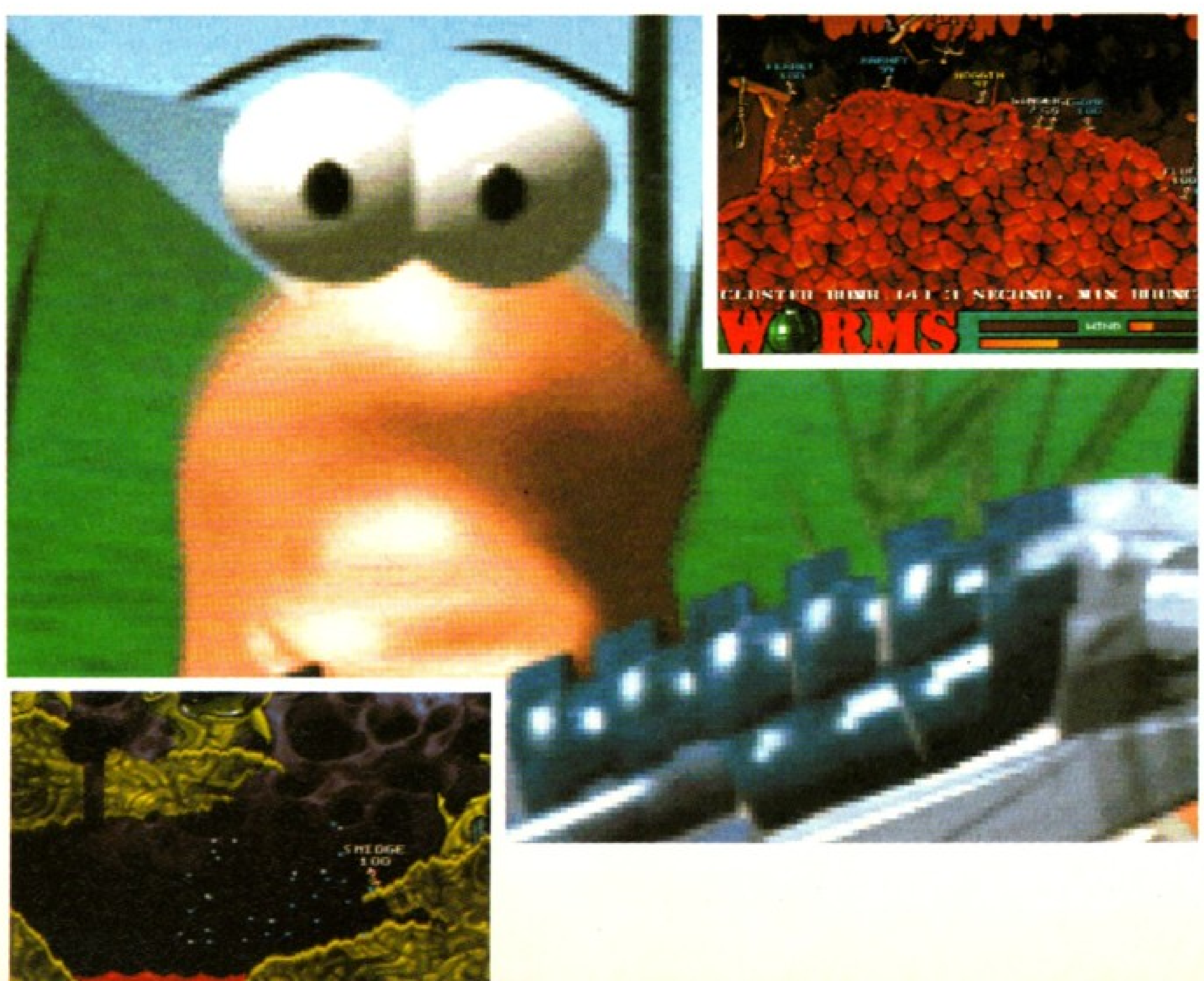


Kamikaze blasting bonanza for mercenary Lemmings fans!

These silicon graphics interludes pop up from time to time to spruce up the otherwise ordinary graphics, and show a worm preparing to battle with the enemy. Actually, they're quite funny sometimes. It's a pity the same standard of graphics aren't used in the real game though.



A worm looking very cross. Or very scared. It's hard to tell.





BY	BMG
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	STRATEGY

BMG's initial Saturn tranche of releases are conversions of Crystal Dynamics' games first released on the 3DO format last year. And an eclectic bunch of discs they are too, with the Horde in particular not fitting neatly into any category. That's because there isn't, to our knowledge, another game that expects you to defend a mediaeval village from ravening monsters.

The game is split into four phases, one of which is action, two being tactical and the fourth a series of FMV sequences that propel the plot along. The last of these is probably the most bizarre: starting with the enactment of a feast, your character is bestowed lands by King Winthrop, and given a sword, Grimthwacker, with which to defend them. Later FMV sequences are a mixture of random news reports, ads, animated sequences and spoof cable news reports.

The first tactical scene follows, giving you a portion of time to spend your income on various projects in and around your village. These range from planting trees and buying cattle to defensive measures like pits, fences and walls. Your defences

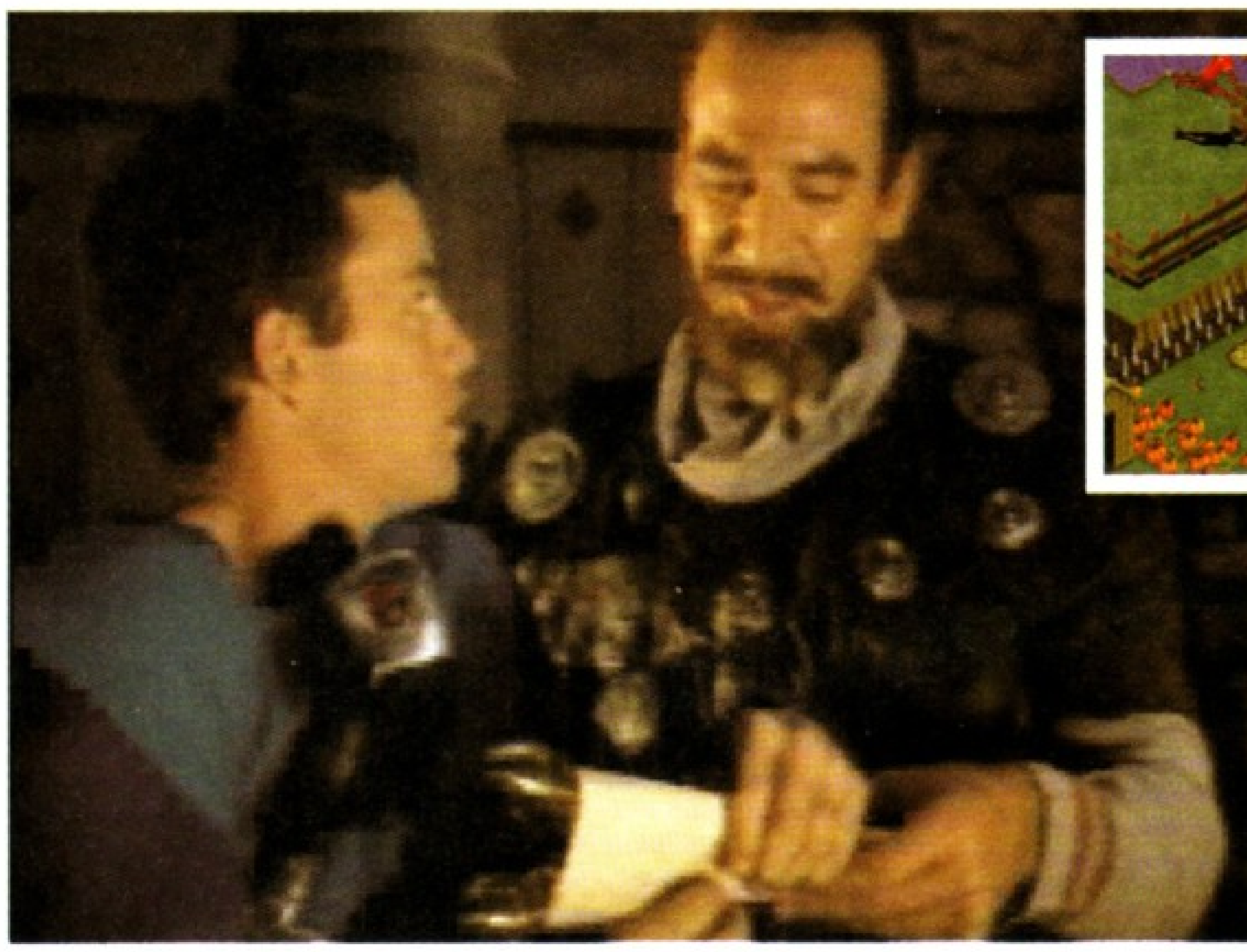
A GROUP OF MONSTERS, HORDELINGS, ATTACK FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, DESTROYING CROPS, BUILDINGS AND GOBBLING UP THE VILLAGERS.

come into play in the next phase — the action sequence. A group of monsters, Hordelings, attack the village from all directions, destroying crops, buildings and gobbling up the villagers. Your armed character can destroy them, and well-developed defences will hinder them.

At the end of this phase, damage is assessed and your income and village both prosper by limiting the attack of the Hordelings. Gradually, the alternating tactical and action phases become more complex — your village sprawls into surrounding territory and your enemies become more powerful.

Occasionally, a final phase where you pay taxes to the King's nefarious exchequer takes place, which also gives you the chance to purchase items of particular value: stone walls to replace fences, meat with which to distract the attackers.

This somewhat complicated overview belies the real simplicity at the heart of the game, which actually fits into a select genre known as 'panic games'. These evil little titles have scenarios which aim to overwhelm you with tasks and difficulties, where only a cool head and methodical gameplay will see you through. Whether Saturn owners wish to be panicked by The Horde's hordes remains to be seen. We'll be calm and collected for the review next month.





The young chappie in the FMV shots is spared his life by the king (after stopping his highness from choking on broth) and is promptly repaid by having an enormous tax bill dumped on him. Most unfair, even if it does emulate real life.



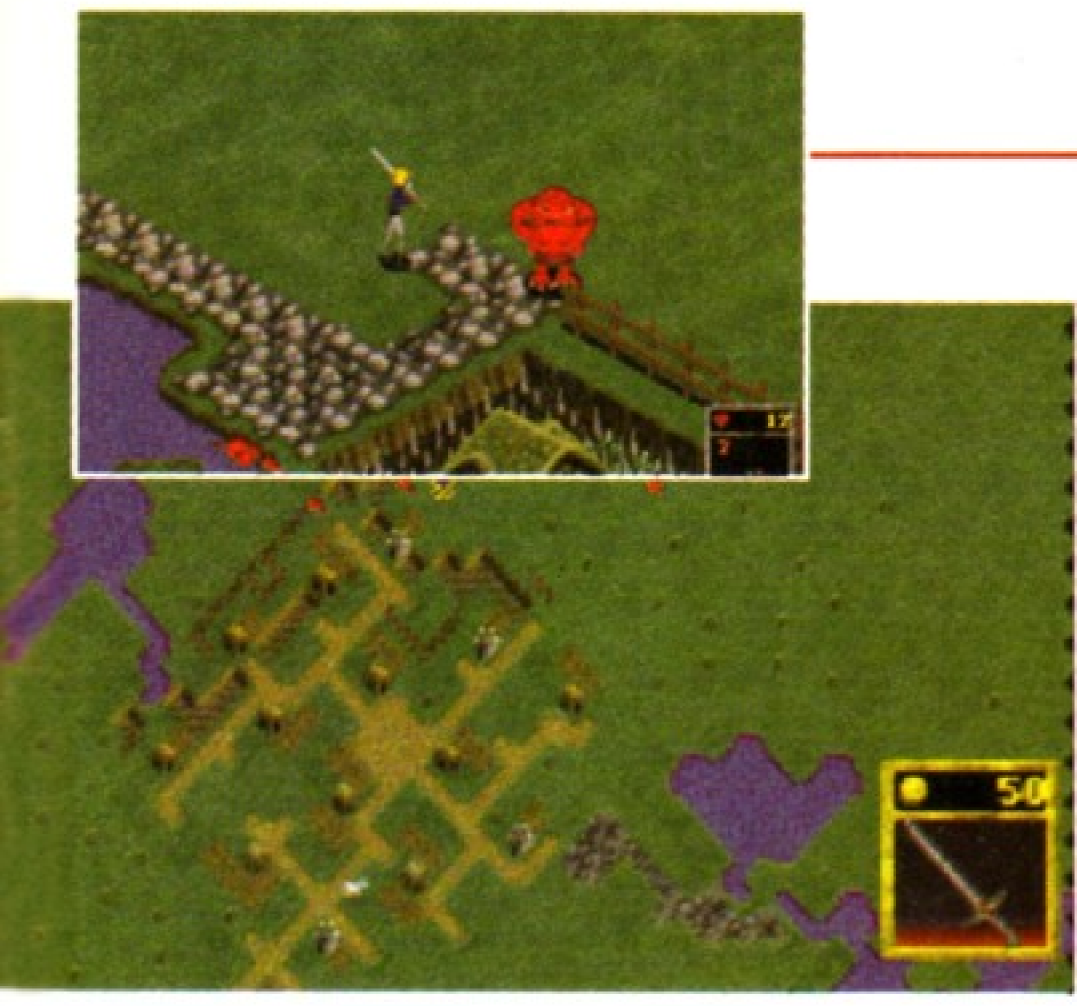


Hey hey! It's a cow! You have to buy plenty of them in this game, and keeping hold of them may not be quite as easy as you'd think. They keep getting attacked by all manner of ruthless hordeling-types you see.

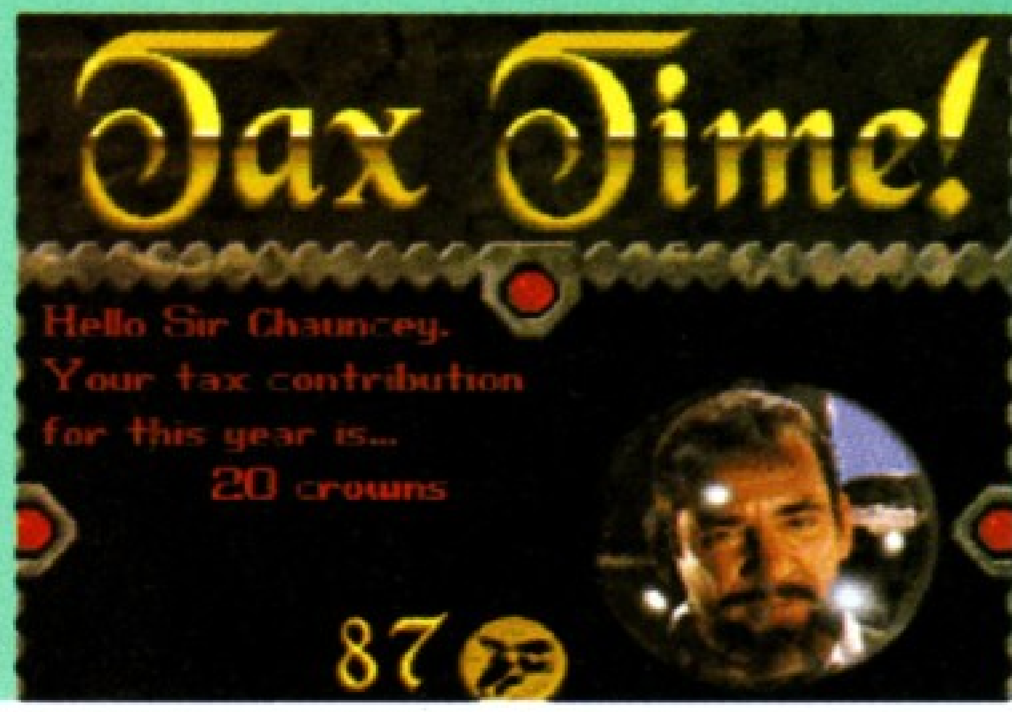




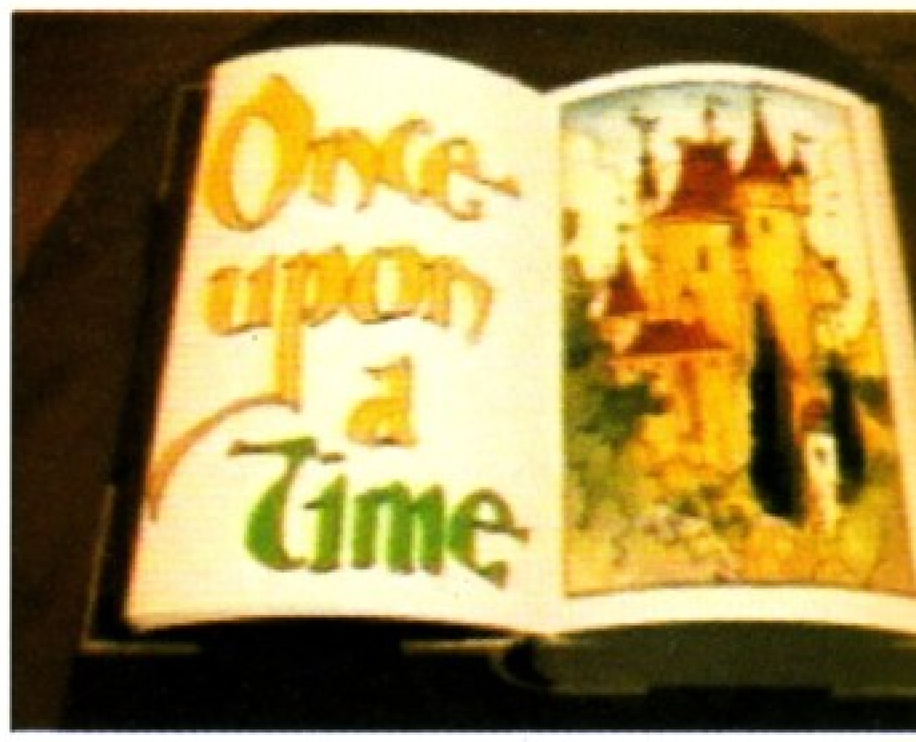
What a prime example of manhood this chappie is. I'm sure you all aspire to be like him. Not at all disgusting or foul in any way.



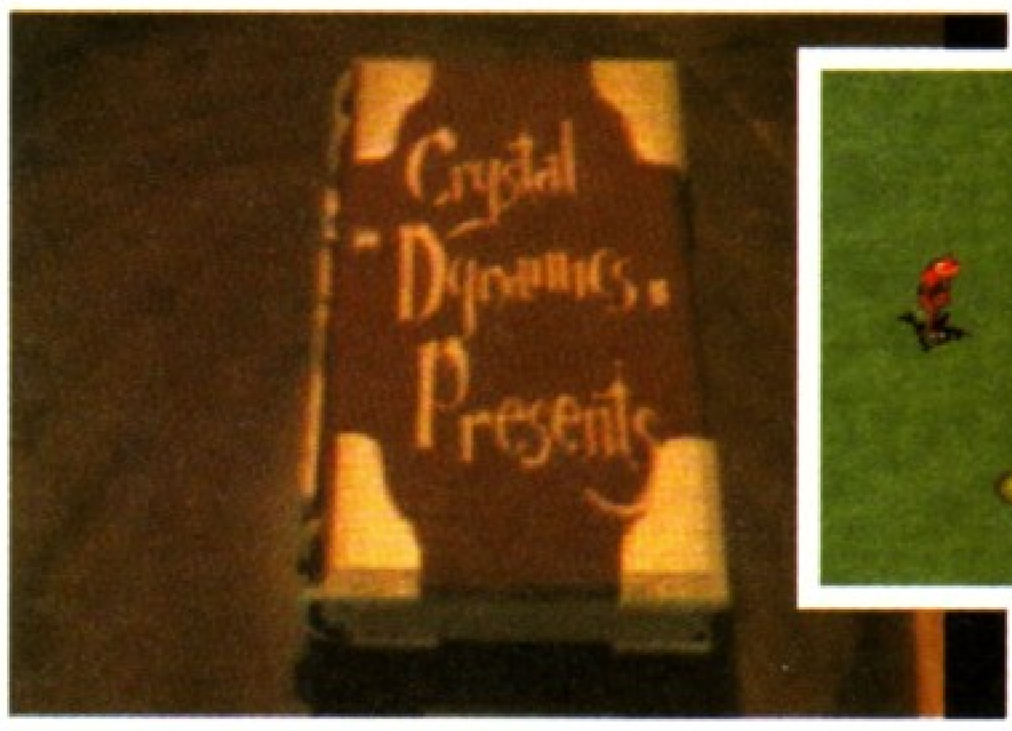




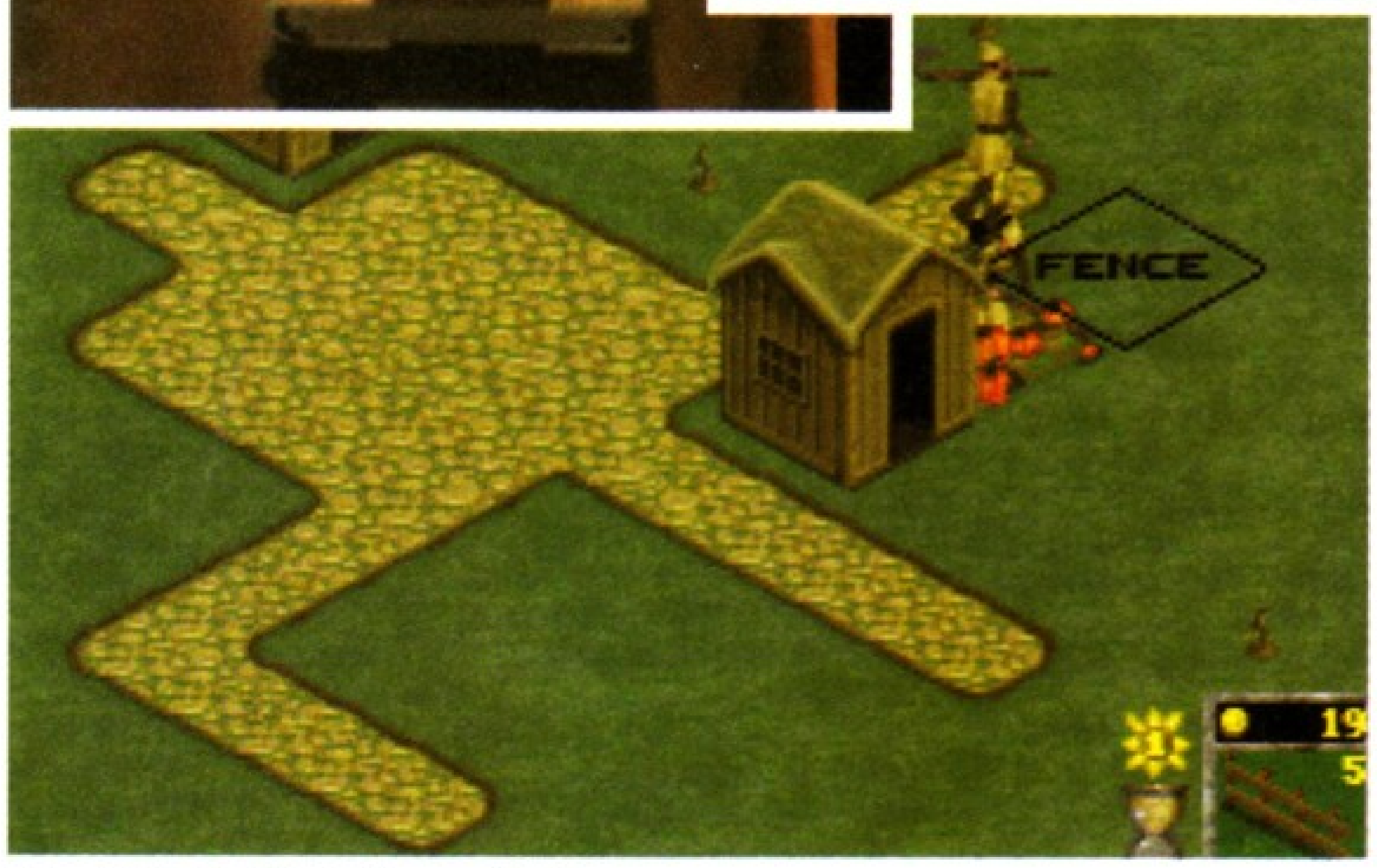
THE HORDE

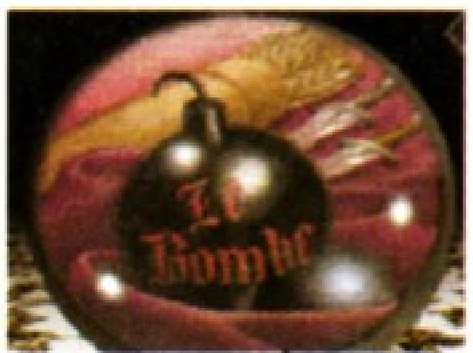


Sim City with, er, cows? What on earth's going on?

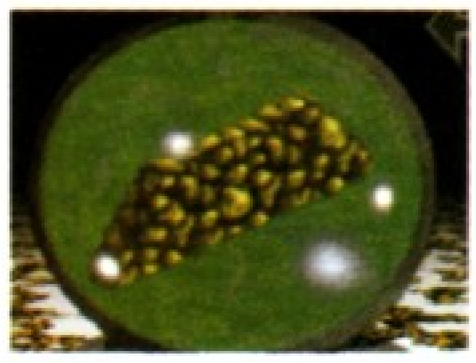


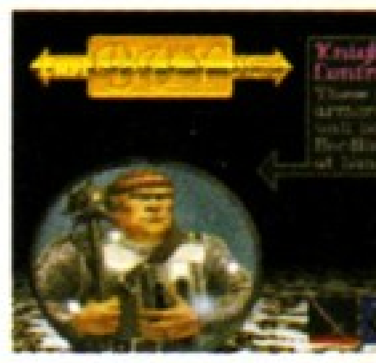














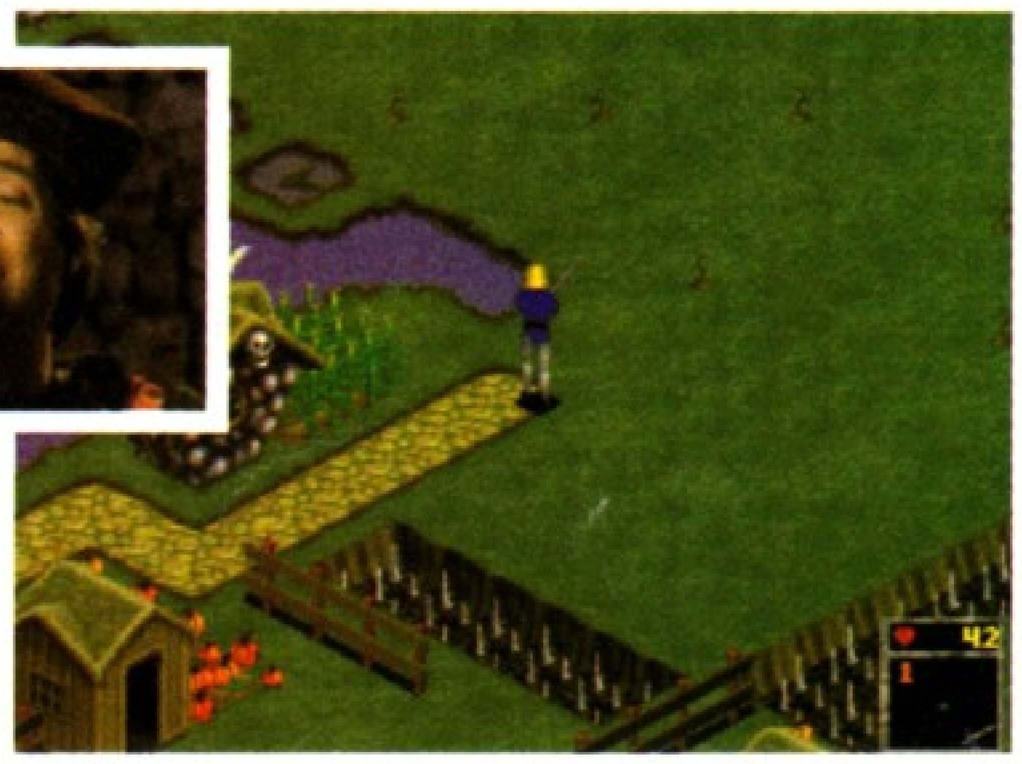
The gameplay is also mixed in with traditional RPG elements. For instance, you can buy weapons, manpower, animals, food – just about everything from the local shop, although you'll have to balance your expenditure with careful planning.

It's a bit like Sim City in the sense that you have to build up environments from nothing, then leave them in the hands of the gods, so to speak. The real art of the game comes in building up an empire strategically, so that you're not left open to attack from the nasty hordelings.











BY	BMG
PRICE	£TBA
RELEASE	TBA

Late last year, BMG delivered a special preview video to all magazines which contained all of the forthcoming year's products. But since then, very little, in fact, NOTHING has been heard of the company. Where did they disappear to? What have they been doing? Well, it's pretty easy to find out – they've completely changed their portfolio of titles, have disbanded all support for the 32X and are going all- out for Saturn domination.









Blazing Dragons

Among their first batch of titles up for release are both Solar Eclipse and Blazing Dragons. Both created by Crystal Dynamics, both have already enjoyed some success on the 3DO. In fact, Crystal Dynamics have an enormous reputation in the video game industry, mainly as they were responsible for some of the early Silicon Graphics demos touted a few years back. But, as any programmer worth his salt will know, creating games is a whole different bundle of scart leads, so to speak. And so far, it's probably fair to say that Crystal Dynamics are still finding their feet. However, all of their titles have been remastered for the Saturn, so with any luck, by the time they're finished, they should be pretty good.

Hell, it was so successful on the 3DO that an animated series of the game has been scheduled to appear on ITV in early 1996.

Blazing Dragons takes the player back to the bygone days of King Arthur, except that the tables have turned and the evil dragons have become knights, while Arthur's trusty men are mere slaves.

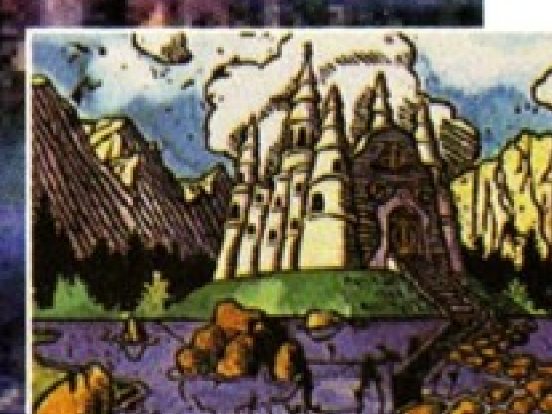
It's difficult to tell what the final versions will be like, although it's fair to say that there's still a lot of work left to be done.

So, the gameplay is more focused around the dragons than anything else, and there's one in particular whose trials of life you'll follow – Flicker. He's a bit of a bumbling idiot really, and you'll have to steer him through all sorts of mishaps in order to prevent him form running into his arch-rival, the Black Dragon (an evil mechanical contraption).

Solar Eclipse however, couldn't be more different. In fact, it harks back more to traditional gameplay, being the 3D shoot 'em up that it is. Actually, the code we've seen is still very early, so it's difficult to tell what the final version will be like, although it's safe to say that there still is a lot of work left to be done on the game's presentation and graphics. As far as content goes, this is your standard blaster – there's loads of levels, plenty of power ups and masses of huge enemies and bosses that pop up out of nowhere.

At the moment BMG can't give any official details as to when these titles will be released, but with so much development time already spent on them, we'd hazard a guess that they'll be out within the next two months. Look out for more info next issue.

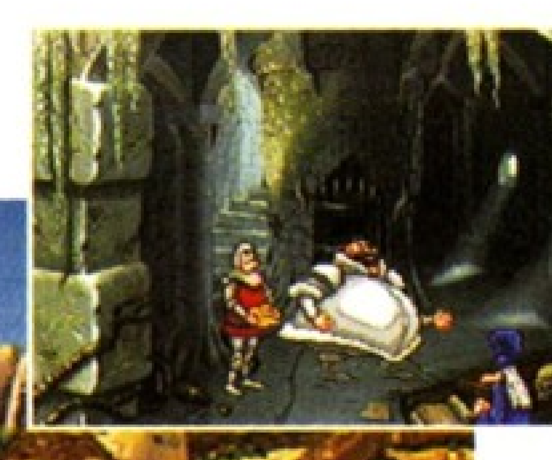






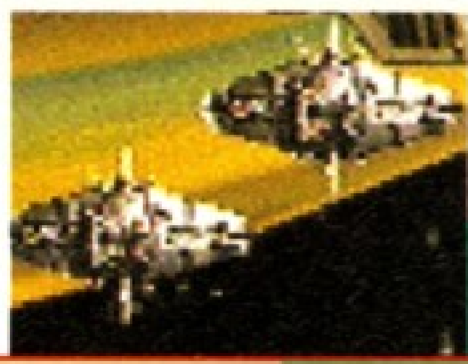


Blazing Dragons is one of those explorative adventures where the main object of the game is to walk around the various environments, discovering clues, picking up objects and talking to *hilarious* characters.

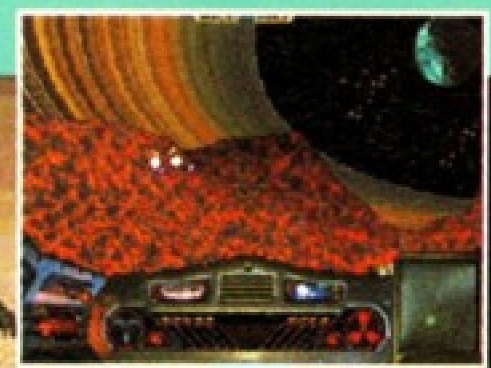


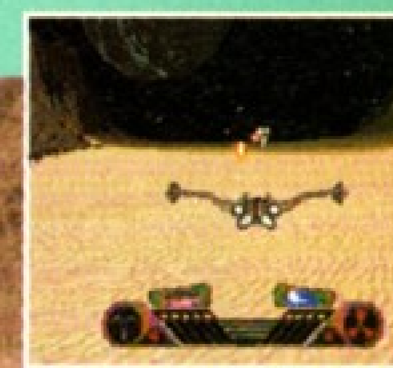


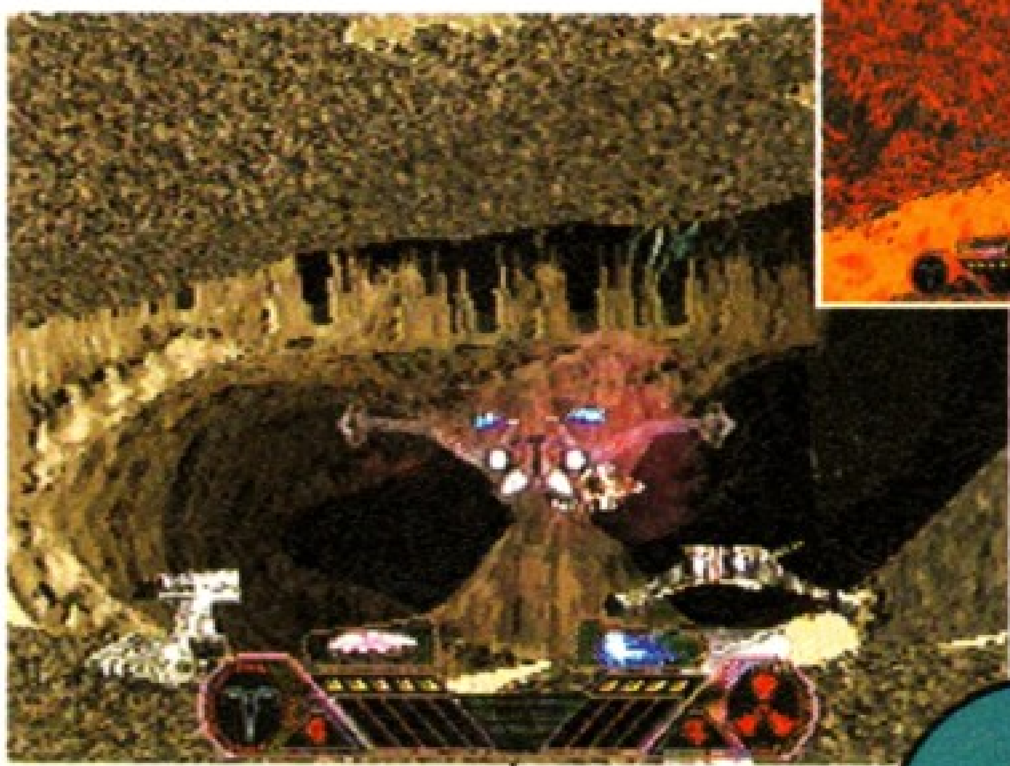
















Solar Eclipse





Number one 3DO hits make their way to the Saturn!



The first title that BMG will release is probably a bit avant-garde as far as game design goes – it was created by Terry Jones, an original member of the Monty Python Flying Circus.







3D shoot 'em ups. We like those. A lot. If they're good, that is.







BY	US GOLD
PRICE	£TBA
RELEASE	DECEMBER

After the small disaster that was Pebble Beach Golf, it's hardly surprising that most people have lost all interest in Golf games. Whatever happened to the classics of the genre such as the legendary PGA series? Why aren't they on the Saturn? Does anybody really care?

Well, evidently, it seems you do. Almost everyone who's ever owned a console has more than likely owned a golf game of some description. It's a kind of interdependent relationship. Like cheese and wine. Or something like that. But, the golf game has had a bit of a rough time of it since the Saturn was unleashed on the public a few months ago. For a start, no one seemed very interested in developing a golf game for the next generation machine. Except for Sega that is, who promptly developed the rather tragic Pebble Beach Golf – which received something of a panning when it was released in September. Still, it seems as though developers are getting round to creating golf games – even EA are bringing their legendary golf series on to the Saturn in the not so distant future.

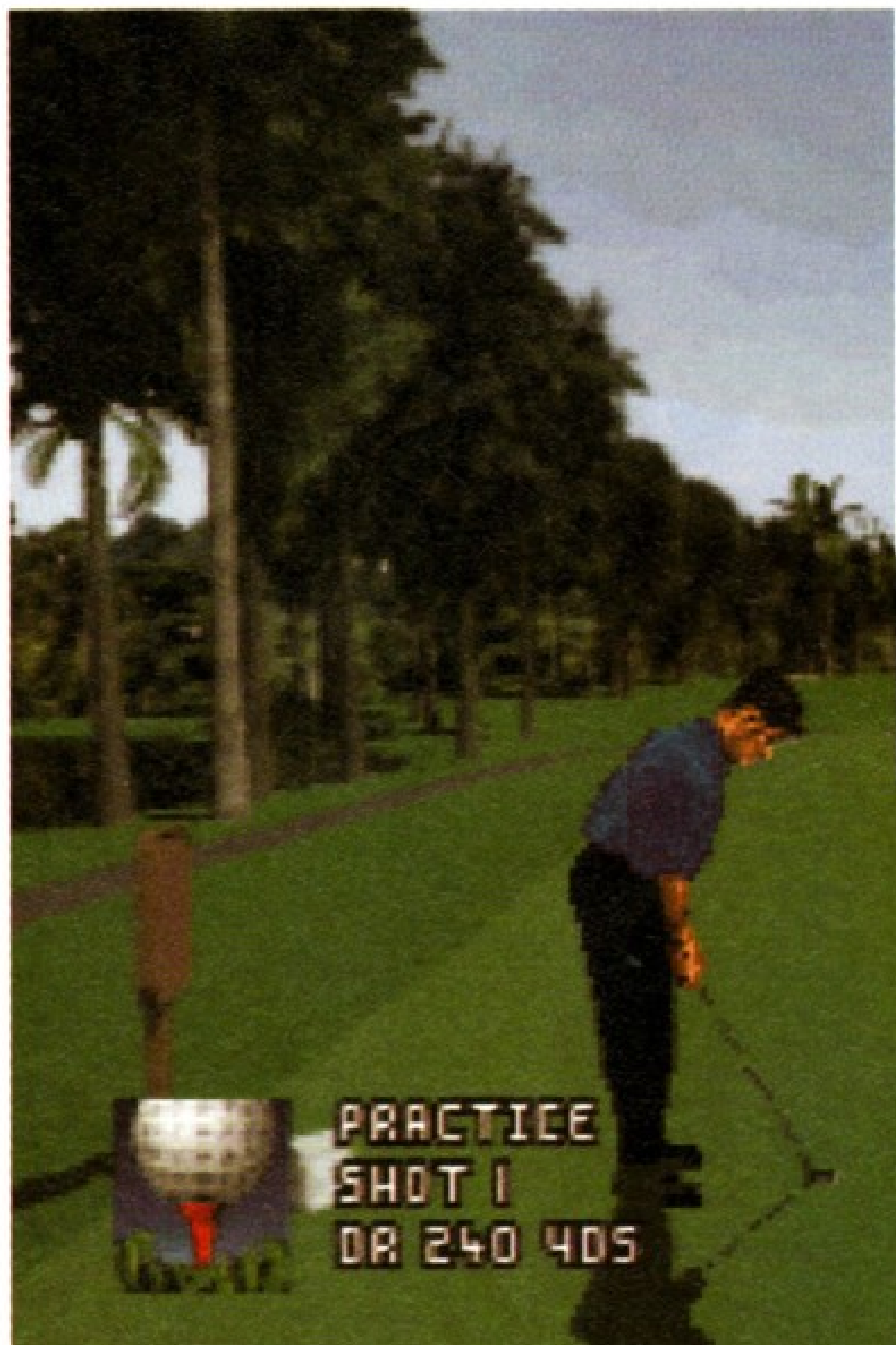
But what of now? Where are we to find our golfing pleasures in the meantime? Well, actually, you won't have to look too far because US Gold have finally reared their rather large and important head and come up with a rather nifty golfing game, entitled World Cup Golf. Encompassing none of your made up golf course rubbish, this offers you the chance to play on one of the world's finest golf courses – the Hyatt Dorado Beach course in Puerto Rico. As you'd expect, all the course graphics are taken from Silicon Graphics renders and there's a hole-by-hole commentary throughout the title.

ENCOMPASSING NONE OF YOUR MADE UP GOLF COURSE RUBBISH, THIS OFFERS YOU THE CHANCE TO PLAY ON ONE OF THE WORLD'S FINEST GOLF COURSES.

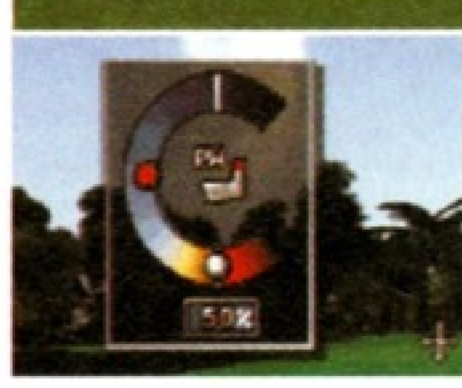
World Cup Golf has already appeared on PC earlier in the year, but the Saturn version has had many improvements made to it in fact, producer Gavin Cheshire even goes as far to say, " There are a lot of golf games that play well, and others that look great but play like dogs. With eight months of further fine tuning of an already superb golfing engine, linked to the massive power of the Saturn, World Cup Golf stands head and shoulders above the competition." We'll see, Gav, we'll see.

World Cup Golf is almost 80%complete and is scheduled for a December/January release, so we should be able to bring you a full review in time for next month.





Although most golf games offer two or three courses, World Cup Golf takes place on just one course – but it is one of the best courses in the world. A maximum of four players can join in the competition.





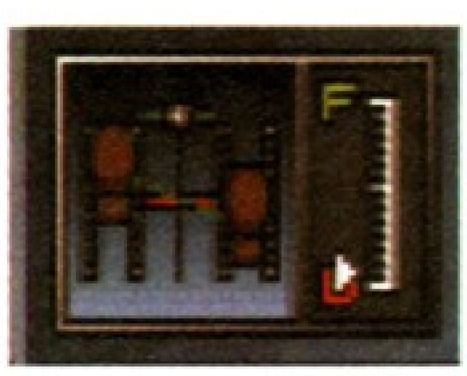




Loads of time and effort has been put into getting the sprite movement absolutely spot on, and although this was released on the PC some months ago, US Gold have taken it back to the drawing board and given the gameplay and graphics more fine tuning.



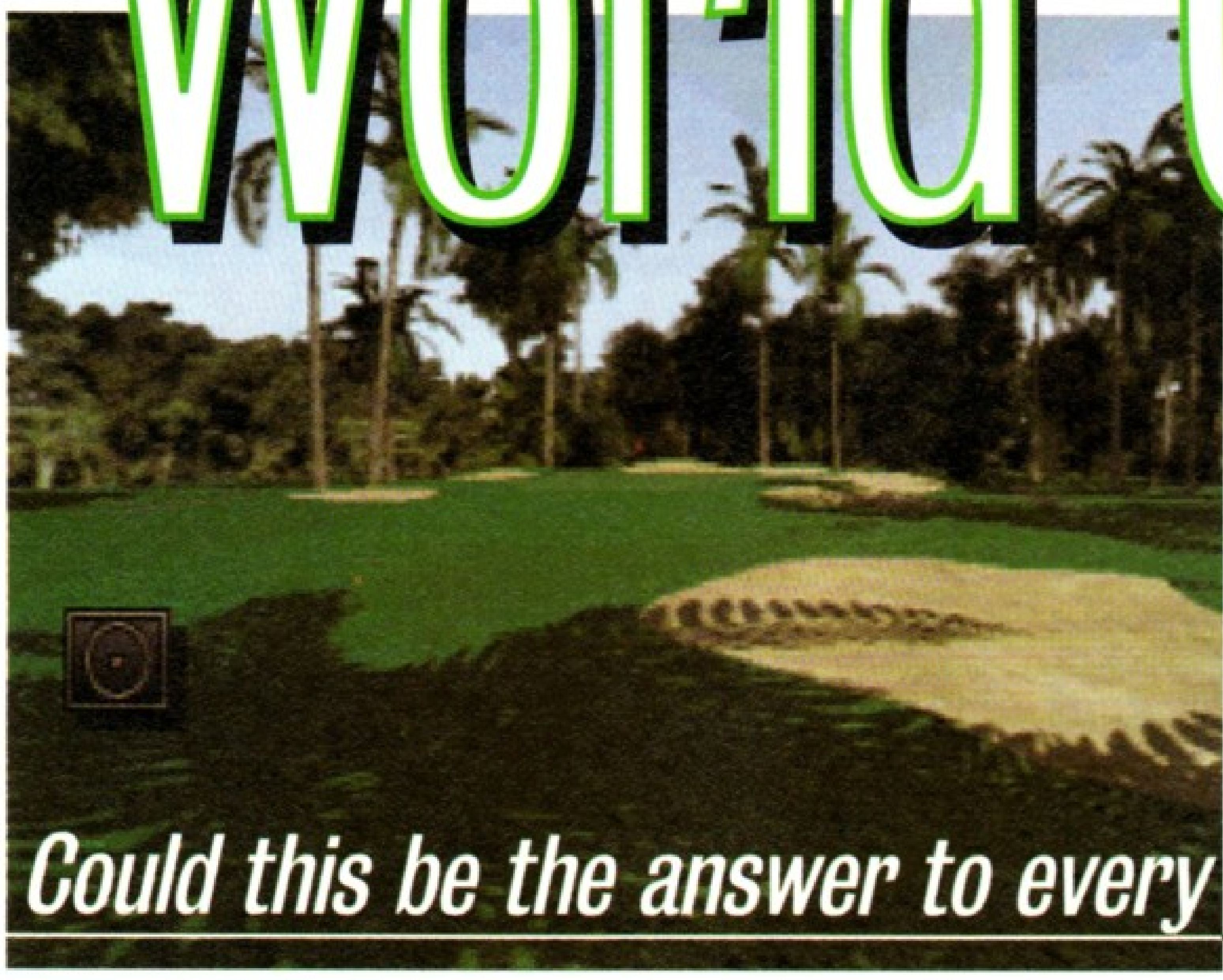
Loads of options. That's the glory of golf for you, readers.





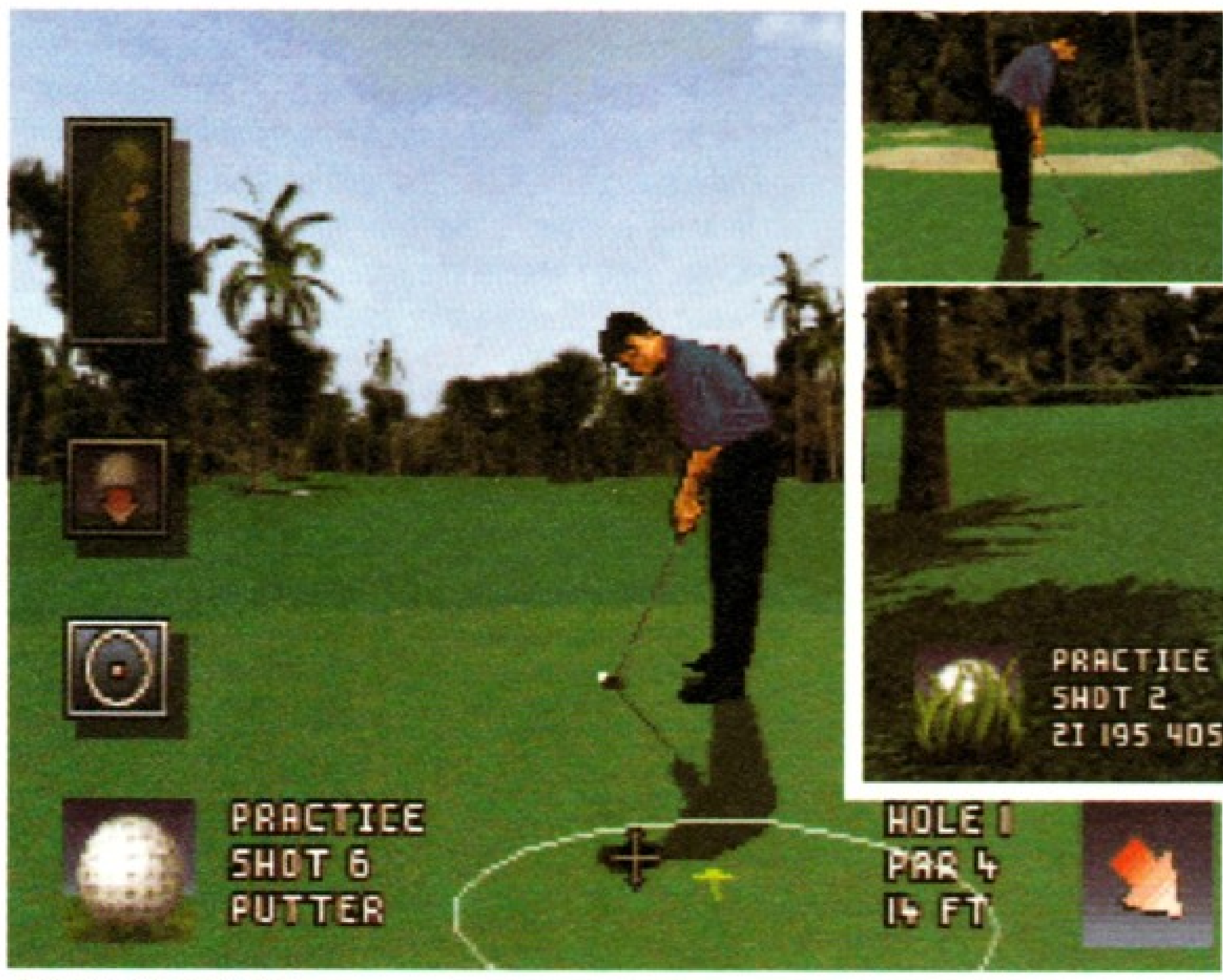


World Cup GOLF



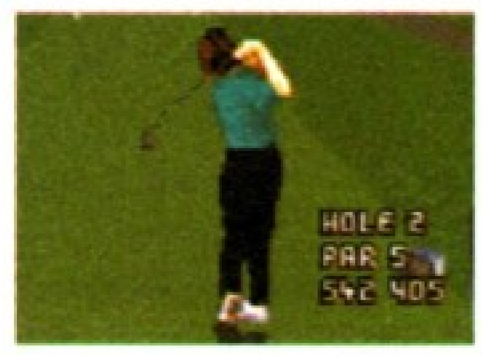
Could this be the answer to every golf fan's next-generation prayers?











Hey, there's male *and* female golfers in this game. Just like real life really, isn't it?





Watch out for that gun toting hell's angel over there. Only joking. Ha ha ha.



The cursor guides the direction you'd like the ball to follow.



letters

Well, the first issue of *SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE* has hit the shelves, and the response, thankfully, has been great. Most people are very happy indeed with our change of image and increased aceness of coverage, and we're very happy with you being happy. So let's all go and live in some idyllic hippy commune somewhere and hug each other. Or alternatively you could just keep writing to us on any kind of Sega or gaming subject, or tell us what you've had for your tea or anything. Hey man, we're your *friends*. So anyway, get on with it, and send the results to the DONUT COMES ALIVE MAILBAG, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Thank you.

WHEY HEY!

DEAR SSM,

Firstly I'd like to say congratulations, WHEY HEY and a very well done to an *excellent* first issue launch, and an excellent promo video.

Grovelling over I would just like to ask where is the hints 'n' tips guide for the Saturn and are you going to be publishing one in the near future?

If possible please could someone help me on Bug!, I'm stuck on Splot Scene 1 as I cannot get past the five floating bubbles. When I rang the Sega Helpline (ha ha) they replied no-one was available to give help as they don't have time to test all games and they don't give tips out. After spending £400 on Sega Saturn and £300 on games surely Sega should make time to help us novice gamers who are still around. I think it would be interesting to hear how many more people have had a negative answer from Sega.

Carry on the good SSM,
Karl Swan, Luton, Beds.



You've got a fair point there Karl, it would be nice if Sega ran a helpline similar to that operated by certain of its third party developers. Perhaps if enough people ask them nicely they'll set one up. We might publish some kind of tips guide in the future, but there aren't really enough games around to warrant it right now. But there is a level select for Bug in this month's tips section, so it's not all bad news!

SURPRISED I DIDN'T WIN

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE,

Firstly I would like to say that your magazine is the best and I have every issue.

Now on to the main reason why I'm writing in. While I was looking at the results of the Virtua Fighter competition in issue 22 I was surprised and disappointed that my character wasn't among the ones that you printed. Now I don't want to criticise any of the entries as some of them were ace but I think that my character, Tyra Star, was just as good as, or better than the best of those efforts. Although the history was inaccurate (I found out that Dural was a robot not a human after I had sent it in) it was quite imaginative and really, that was what you said you were looking for.

After working on it just about every day for a month I feel as if I have wasted my time, especially since I should have used all of that time doing my homework [That's not our fault – SSM]. I am currently in my final year of secondary school and I have fallen a bit behind on English, Technology and Geography because I used some of my homework time on the competition, although I'm catching up now [That's nice to hear – SSM].

All I am asking you to do is to send my work off to AM2. If it isn't possible than could you at least print it in the magazine and see what other readers think of it?

That's all I have to say other than "Keep up the good work".
Perminder Suman, Huddersfield, W Yorks.

Well you seem to be lacking somewhat in the imagination department, having not been able to a) think of something more constructive to do with a month's worth of evenings at your age, or b) foresee the ensuing detrimental effects to your education. Just think, you could have fallen behind by going out and sniffing glue or joyriding, and instead you spent the time on a competition. That's why you didn't win. Still, I blame the parents.

PS We can tell you what the other readers think. They don't care.

FRENZIED BOX OPENING

DEAR SSM,

I recently found myself in the nice position of actually having some money left at month end. So, off I went to my local computer store and bought myself a Saturn plus RF lead (my television does not have a SCART socket).

However, after a frenzied box opening session when I got home, I read the Saturn handbook only to discover that I did not need an RF lead as the Saturn can be run through my video.

Now, surely if this is a viable option for people with SCART-free television, why was it not made more widely known? I, and many others alike, have bought a £25 lead that I don't need.

Surely information as simple as this could have better publicised by Sega or are they too intent on making money at the expense of the already over-paying end user?

B Bethel, Twyford, Berks.





Rally and Fighters 2 – easily outshine any game available on Playstation at the moment.

It's hard to apportion blame in this case, Mr B. Sega could perhaps have made it clearer that any old SCART socket in the house would run your Saturn for you, but then, so could Dixons. Maybe manufacturers just assume an unrealistic level of technical familiarity on the part of their customers. But future Saturn owners be warned – video SCART sockets are perfect for your console, so no RF required.

MUMMY... I'M SCARED

DEAR SSM,

I have read many magazines over the last few weeks and I have noticed that many people are slagging off the Saturn in many ways.

For example, in one magazine they pointed out that in the year to come the Saturn would struggle a lot competing against Sony's machine. What are they saying? They don't even know what Sega have lined up yet. I have also read that Sony's games have been programmed using many different libraries. I hope that Sega Rally, Virtua Fighter 2 and many other games made and released by Sega using their libraries outshine the PlayStation games.

Your magazine is excellent in every aspect – Virtua City's great!

PS Where's the posters you used to give away?

James Cross, Hale Village, Liverpool.

The Saturn has an ace new library, the SGL OS in fact. You can read more about this fascinating development and other interesting and inspiring insights into the future of the Saturn in our special feature on the subject elsewhere in this issue. PS: They're up on your wall.



Could it be that the Saturn version of FIFA Soccer won't be up to scratch? That's what Michael Golfis thinks, but then, who is he?



Clockwork Knight 2, out in the shops now for a few of your earth pounds. And rather good it is too.



WHAT A RRP OFF

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE,

Oh dear, Sega are at it again. I have always been a loyal supporter of Sega but recently I was very disgusted. In late September I strolled down to my local computer store and purchased a new shiny Saturn and a copy of Daytona at a RRP of £399.

It was only on that Saturn advert I noticed that the RRP had been reduced to £299 to battle with the PlayStation. I had signed up to a buy now pay later scheme where I take home the Saturn and am expected to pay £399 next April. Cool, I thought, that's a hundred quid in my pocket. But when I checked the contract "The sum at time of sale, due in April". Oh dear!

I have never felt so sick in all my life. I was told there will be a few reductions in price, but this is a hundred flipping quid, I could have bought a Megadrive with that. Here's my advice to people wanting a Saturn this Christmas – wait until the Winter sales, they'll be giving them away in boxes of cereal. Seriously though, I recommend you wait, you will save a fortune.

Terry Cocking, Blundeston, Suffolk.

You've remained admirably calm for someone a ton out of pocket there, Terry, and for that you must be applauded. However, whilst a pre-Chrimbo price reduction was inevitable, the severity of the cut is dependent on both the weakening Yen lowering import costs and the fact that the £299 machine comes without a bundled game – so customers have to shell out for Virtua Fighter, which hopefully you didn't. Still, it doesn't give you your hypothetical hundred back. Sorry. Maybe you could try suing the shop, or having a scream. Or murdering commuters.

LAUGH AND SCOFF IN HIS FACE

DEAR SSM,

I was getting a little bit worried about my Saturn and future games. That is until I got the free video! Wow! I just wish to say THANKS. The future looks very impressive indeed, so now I'm off to my "PlayStation mates house" to laugh and scoff in his face, Ha Ha Ha!

Carl, Birmingham

Why not poke him in the eyes while you're at it?

MUMMY... I'M SCARY

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE,

Firstly I would like to congratulate you on having the best toilet read in the country. No really, it's ACE – informative and could be classed as humorous – if you like that sort of thing!

Having just purchased a Sega Saturn I am having trouble with this reality lark – there's just no buttons out there in the real world and not enough blood-curdling action!

One thing I want to ask, do you know if there's going to be a flight simulator for the Saturn like F29 Retaliator for the PC (but obviously with better graphics) where you can fly around quite peacefully then if you feel like it you can shoot the living crap out of something?

Well, that's my dribble over. I will speak to you soon with my times for the Daytona Challenge.

Big love,

Matt Hosking, Clifton, Bristol.

Thanks Matt, we love you too. There aren't any flight sims of your dreams planned yet. Perhaps you could apply the same philosophy to this "reality" of which you speak.

GET A NEW CAMERA

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE,

I bought issue 22 of the Sega Magazine. I looked inside and I saw what I think was the most impressive game to come out on the Saturn, it was a preview of FIFA Soccer '96. I looked at the pictures of the intro of the game and I thought to myself "the graphics look really good". But when I saw pictures of the actual game being played it looked like a Master System version of FIFA. Is it your camera that makes the picture blurry or is it the actual game itself? If it is the camera I think you'd better change it because it will make people think that the graphics are pathetic and therefore won't buy the game. Anyway, this is the only complaint I have got. I think your magazine for the Saturn is great. Keep up the good work!

Michael Golfis, Glasgow, Scotland.

Sometimes, when games are really early on in development, we can't actually get a copy of the game into our offices and have to take our pictures from grotty demos or videos. We'd rather have these in the mag than not show the game at all, but true enough they're not always of our usual pristine picture standard. But quit your whining or you'll get nowt.

THE SATURN IS DEAD

DEAR SATURN MAGAZINE,

I am writing to you, out of concern for my new wonder console The Saturn, by Sega. Sega is a company for which I have always had a lot of respect, until I recently read in another mag that an American company called Lockheed Martin were developing the Saturn 2, and that the Saturn maybe prematurely upgraded or even phased out altogether!

So after all that hype, all that money (some £700+) I have purchased a dead console. I, along with everyone else that invested in the Saturn, the add-ons and the games: – "SHOULD BLOODY WELL HOPE NOT".

I have always relied on your mag for info and insight into present and future developments in the world of Sega games, add-ons and consoles, and above all I find your mag is the only mag to get for all things Sega.

Marc Foster, Cregagh, Belfast.

Calm down there Marc, you're in no danger of being rendered obsolete. There's no such thing as the Saturn 2, and Sega won't launch a single new piece of hardware until the end of 1998 at the very earliest. Although obviously future machines are always in development as they are for Sony, Atari and 3DO.

Q&A

Despite the wealth of information at your eyetips in every issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, some of you still have a thirst for MORE KNOWLEDGE. Providing this is the purpose of Q&A. If you like a question or two answering, make sure it's interesting and send it in to: YOU ARE A FOAMER, Q&A, SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

LITTLE TOMMY SPEAKS

DEAR SATURN MAG,

I am a Megadrive owner and I want to get a new game. Could you put this list in order, best to worst – Theme Park, Micro Machines 2, Virtua Racing, Comix Zone, Gunstar Heroes.

2: I want to upgrade to 32-BIT – should I buy a 32X or sell my Megadrive and get a Neptune?

3: When is the Neptune going to be released officially?

4: If you buy a 32X from Special Reserve as featured in your magazine would you still get the £50 worth of vouchers?

Please answer my questions or I'll, I'll, er, I'll – oh never mind.

Tom G's Puppet, Longsight, Manchester.

1: Gunstar Heroes, Virtua Racing, Micro Machines 2, Theme Park, Comix Zone, but they're all ace.
2 & 3: Sadly plans for the European launch of the Neptune have been shelved indefinitely. It's highly unlikely the machine will ever see the light of day on these shores, so you're best off going for a normal 32X.
4: It'd be a bit crap if you didn't. Try ringing them and asking.

POOR OLD SONIC

DEAR SSM,

I have just bought your number one edition of the SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE which is out of this world, so to speak, but there is one review that you printed which I entirely disagree with. It's Street Fighter The Movie. You only gave it 49% overall and 51% for graphics. Why such a low score? OK there are three other Street Fighter games around, is that why you scored it so badly? I mean, if it was the first Streetfighter game, then I would think that it would be a different story wouldn't it! Who cares what you rate it as, I enjoy the game, I enjoy playing it and don't say I'm a sad person 'cause I'm not, I've played Virtua Fighter as well and I can't wait until VF2 is out!

Please don't slag off a game because it's been done before, poor old Sonic never gets slagged off, does he?

J Newman, Chandlers Ford, Hants.

Streetfighter The Movie wasn't criticised for its late-coming slot in the Streetfighter lineage. After all, there aren't ANY Streetfighter games for the Saturn. It was the slow-down, poor digitised graphics, feeble animation and general dog-ness of its gameplay that earned it the kicking it quite rightly deserves.

Why did we score it so badly? We have our reasons.



IS IT WORTH IT?

DEAR SATURN MAG,

This is the first time I am writing to you. I wondered whether it would be worth it because in recent magazines people have written and complained that some of their letters have not been published and answered. I only have a few questions that I would like you to answer.

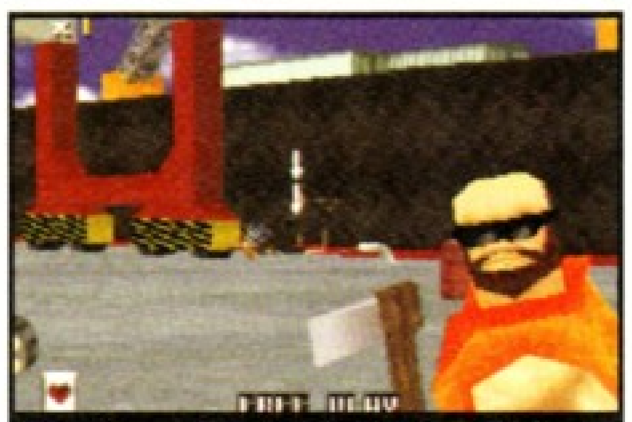
1: I have a Sega Saturn and I also have Daytona USA. Do you think for Christmas I should get another game like Virtua Cop or get the Arcade racer?

2: Virtua Fighter came with my Saturn. In the VF Remix and VF2 can you still access Dural?

3: I've seen the reports of Bug! and they seem to be extremely good but is the game as good as it sounds?

4: Do you have any more back issues as I missed number 20 of Sega Magazine?

PS For all the people who write to the magazine please try to make your letters easier to understand for the people who don't know much about this sort of computer. Because in the last issue (number one) there was a letter which read "In issue 21 someone asked a question I would like to know the answer to. Is Daytona going to be Remixed with the new AM2 SGL OS?". Now I don't know what that means and I'm sure other readers don't either, so can you explain it please?


Get Virtua Cop on December 8th!

Simon Burnett, Chinnor, Oxon.

1: Go for the game. The Arcade Racer is only any use if you've got loads of driving games to keep you occupied.
2: Oh aye.
3: It's certainly not bad. In fact, it's very good.
4: Try calling 0858 468888
PS The A2 SGL OS is a brand new Operating System (hence the OS) for the Saturn which makes it easier to produce brilliant texture-mapped polygon graphics. And brilliant they are. Keep reading the mag to stay abreast of these tricky quantum leaps in technology and amaze your friends.

Q&A IS ACE!!!

DEAR SEGA MAG,

Your mag is great and is the best one around and the idea of having a Q&A section is ace so please could you print this, it's the first time I have written in. Please!

1: My dad is just about to buy a PC but I say the graphics are better on the Saturn. Am I right?

2: Will there be a keyboard with maybe a writing program on the Saturn?

3: Is it possible to get the latest releases on the Saturn such as Sega Rally on the PC?

4: The games on the PC seem to be copies of Saturn games except you have to read an endless manual before you start. Will there be such complicated games on the Saturn for boring old people (my dad)?

5: How long will it be until Sega bring out a new games console?

6: Will there be an Internet sort of thing available on the Saturn?

7: In the games club that I am a member of the Saturn is £299.99 but in one of your issues you said it wouldn't go below £200. How can this be?

8: I may be able to get a Saturn for Christmas but I'll have to share it with my brother who will bring all his snotty-nosed friends round to crap it up as he has done to my Megadrive too many times! Please could you give me some suggestions of ways around this? I BEG YOU!

See ya!

Jonathan Walker, Burgh Heath, Surrey.

1 Er... in certain cases. It's better than most PCs, except the very very expensive ones (£2000+).
2 Keyboard: perhaps. Writing program: lord knows.
3 Is it f.
4 Games like Sim City 2000 and Theme Park are port-overs of classic PC games. Expect lots more of that type of thing.
5 Not until 1998 at the very earliest.
6 it's a possibility, but there aren't any concrete plans in public hands yet.
7 DOES NOT COMPUTE!
8 Perhaps you could share it with your dad and persuade him not to buy a PC. Or collate blackmail material against your brother and use it against him in malicious ways. Or kill him.

NUMBER ONE FAN

DEAR SSM,

This is your no. 1 fan Chris Baker, please could you answer these questions.

1: I want a Saturn for Christmas. However, the back of my TV has no SCART lead connector. Is it true you need an RF lead and do you lose picture or sound quality with one?

2: Will Virtua Fighter 2 be out on Saturn before Christmas?

3: Is Mortal Kombat 3 coming out on Saturn before Christmas?

4: Will a virtual reality mask come out for the Saturn?

5: Will a Saturn version of the Playstation skateboard stick ever be released?

6: Will there be a release of a full-motion video cartridge, if so, when?

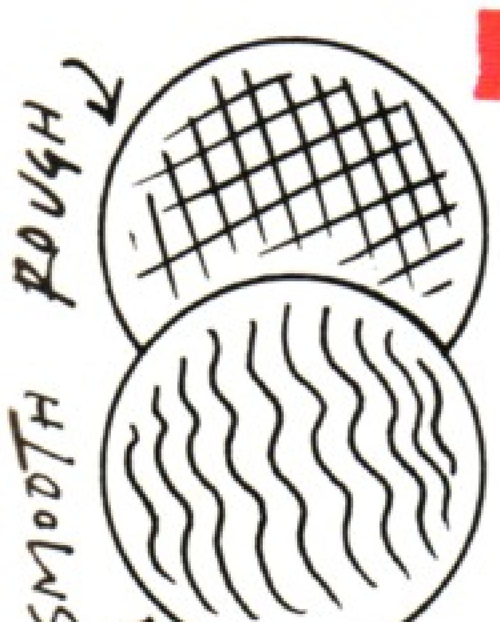
If you answer these it'll really help. Thanks!

Chris baker, Church Village, Mid Glam, S Wales.

1: Well you won't be able to run your Saturn through your telly, but you should be able to run it through a video (most VCRs have a SCART socket in the back). If you don't got one, yes you'll need an RF lead, and yes there will be a slight loss in picture quality. Sorry.
2: Oh yes.
3: Oh no.
4: Let's hope not.
5: Er... it might. But it's not exactly going to have a wealth of software support, is it? And can you imagine trying to play Virtua Fighter with it? You'd break your damnfool neck.
6: Well you don't really need an FMV card for games thanks to the Saturn being ace. But if you're wondering about running Video CDs, the Saturn Video Card is already in the shops priced £170. And it's pretty good.



I ALWAYS CLEAN MY FACE WITH **OXY DUO PADS**. THE ROUGH SIDE CLEARS ALL THE DEAD SKIN, GREASE AND GRIME OUT OF YOUR PORES. THEN THE MEDICATED STUFF IN THE SMOOTH SIDE WIPES OUT THE BACTERIA THAT CAUSE SPOTS. WHAT'S MORE, IT STAYS ON YOUR SKIN AND KEEPS ON WORKING FOR HOURS.



I USE **OXY DUO PADS** EVERY MORNING AND EVENING WITHOUT FAIL. YOU CAN CALL ME PREDICTABLE, CONVENTIONAL, WHATEVER; BUT YOU CAN'T CALL ME SPOTTY.

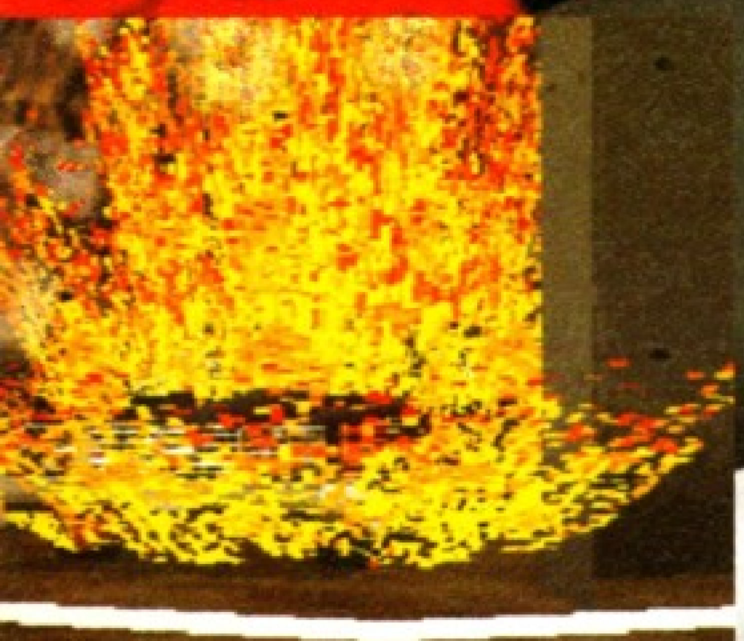


SPOTS? OXYCUTE 'EM WITH OXY 10!

OXY 10 TREATMENT FOR SPOTS CONTAINS BENZOYL PEROXIDE · ALWAYS READ THE LABEL · OXY AND OXYCUTE 'EM! ARE TRADE MARKS.

Touted in the pages of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE for a near eternity, Virtua Cop seemed as though it would never draw to completion. But, with the Japanese *release date looming dangerously close,* developers AM2 have finally produced the finished title – *brilliantly close to the arcade original* and with extra features thrown in too. SAM HICKMAN dons dark glasses and goes undercover to bring justice, peace and essential level details to all righteous Saturn owners.

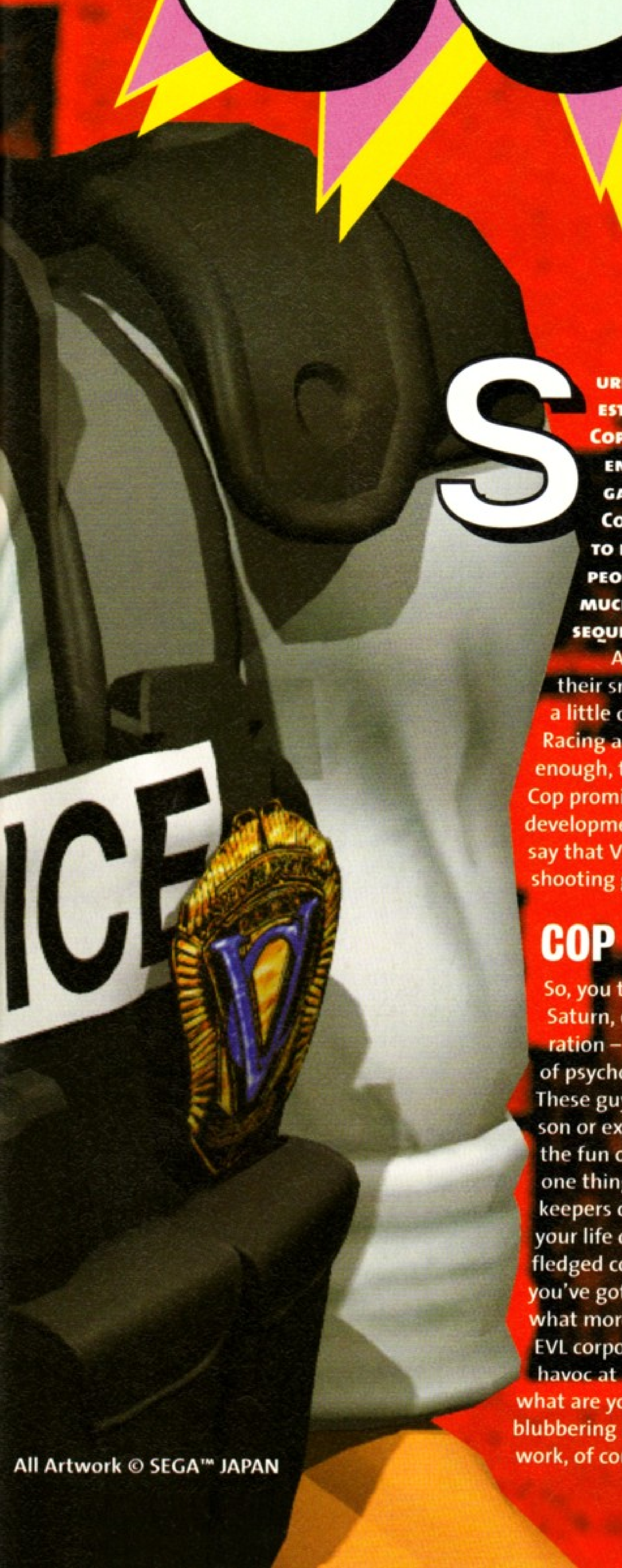








Call the COPS!









SURELY ANYONE AND EVERYONE WHO'S HAD EVEN A PASSING INTEREST IN VIDEO GAMES HAS PUMPED A SMALL FORTUNE IN TO VIRTUA COP – ITS STYLISED VISUALS AND FAST GUNNING ACTION HAS EVEN ENTICED PEOPLE WHO WOULD NEVER DREAM OF PLAYING VIDEO GAMES INTO THE ARCADES. AND, EVEN AS THE RELEASE OF VIRTUA COP 2 LOOMS NEAR, YOU'LL STILL FIND VIRTUA COP BEING PLAYED TO DEATH IN ANY ARCADE. IT'S NOT DIFFICULT TO SEE WHY EITHER: PEOPLE LIKE TO GO A BIT MAD WITH A GUN – ESPECIALLY IF ITS PRETTY MUCH GUARANTEED THAT THEY WON'T HAVE TO ANSWER TO THE CONSEQUENCES.

Anyway, when it was first announced that Sega would bring their smash-hit coin-op into the home, you can imagine why we were a little cynical about the whole thing – Star Wars Arcade and Virtua Racing appeared on the ill-fated 32X at the time and although nice enough, they were nowhere near arcade perfect, something that Virtua Cop promised to be. But, after tracking the game from its early development versions right through to the finished code, we can safely say that Virtua Cop is arcade perfect and it is, without a doubt, the best shooting game available for any home system.

COP OUT!

So, you think you're pretty tough, sitting there with your brand new Saturn, eh? Well, how do you fancy taking on the might of EVL corporation – possibly the most ruthless bunch of psychos ever to appear in a video game? These guys don't need any particular reason or excuse to shoot – they just do it for the fun of it, and what's more, if there's one thing they definitely can't stand, it's keepers of the peace. Which kind of makes your life difficult seeing as you're a fully-fledged copper and everything. But hey, you've got a gun and a bullet-proof vest – what more do you want? And besides, the EVL corporation are already causing untold havoc at a building site downtown. So what are you going to do? Stand there like a blubbering idiot? Nah, you're gonna get to work, of course!





LEVEL ONE: THE ARMS BLACK MARKET!

An arms cache has been discovered in a disused building site, and what's more, the criminals are still in the area! They've already heard that you're on the way though and are heavily armed, not to mention well prepared. You need to infiltrate the site, wipe away all of the enemy and retrieve the firearms (well that's the assumption anyway).



Armed at first with a simple pistol, you'll have to manoeuvre around the outside of the site, dodging rapid fire and blasting anyone who pulls a gun on you. There are a few stray innocents wandering around and of course, you'll have to avoid them (otherwise you'll lose a life), but generally, this part of the level isn't too taxing.



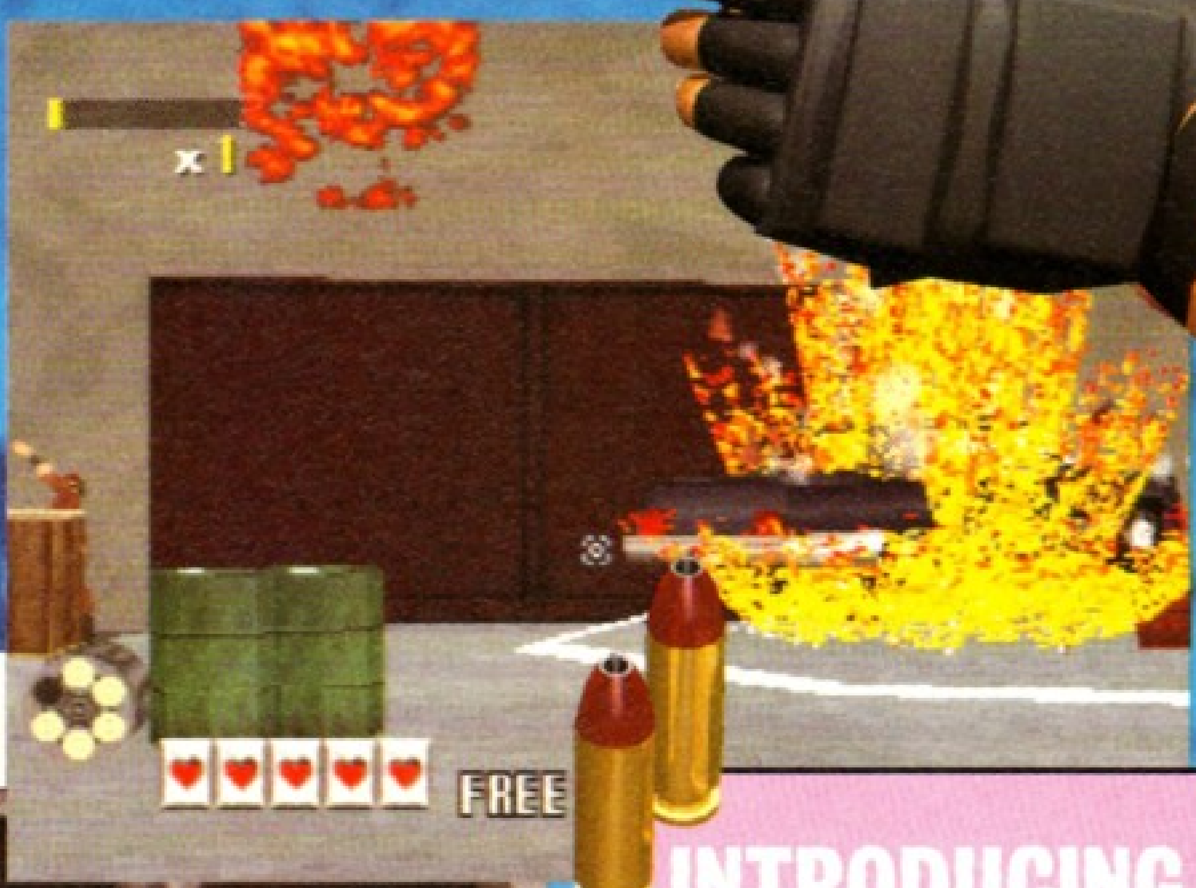
It's when you step into scene two that things really start to hot up. Bad suited polygon dudes pop out from every direction, topple from roofs, and there's even a few armed with grenades and axes who strategically hide behind barrels and cars. Of course, you can shoot everything in sight – the glass in the offices, the barrels – which incidentally provide a hugely satisfying explosion – and you can even shoot the grenades out of the air!



However, the real showdown awaits you in the third part of this level. After blasting your way through the outside of the warehouse, you'll finally infiltrate the building. Here, the bad guys are out in full force, lurking behind packing crates and scurrying across the balconies above. There's loads of extra weapons hidden in this part of the building and unfortunately, there's a fair few innocents too.

After blowing up untold amounts of cars and wasting away a small town's worth of people, there's still one last obstacle preventing you from completing a level. What is it? It's Kong, Virtua Cop's very own rent-a-thug, armed with an arsenal of gigantic grenades who arrives on an airborne crane! After seeing the travesty that is his army he claims "I'll take care of you myself!" Upon which he launches a thousand or so bombs your way – shoot them out of the air whilst simultaneously launching an attack on him.





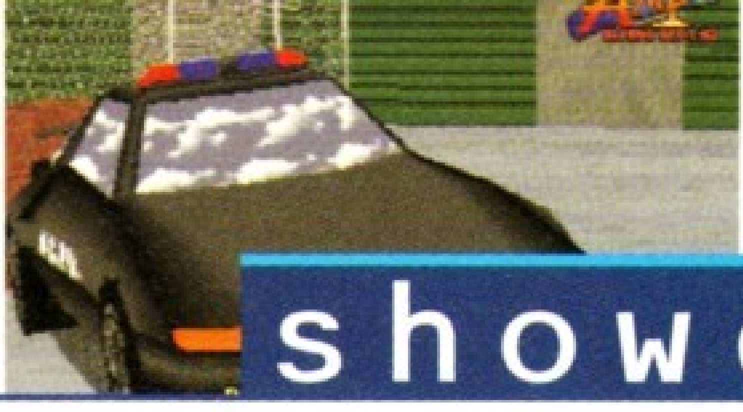
INTRODUCING...ORIGINAL MODE!

Knowing that a straight conversion of an arcade game isn't enough to entice today's gamers for very long, AM2 have brought some extra features to the Saturn conversion. Basically, original mode can be played as either a one or two player game and take the form of a randomly-generated shooting range. In one-player mode you'll just be required to rack up the points, but in two-player mode it's a race to hit the target first. At the end of the level your points will be totted up and the winner is, well it's obvious really. It's the one with the most points.









LEVEL TWO: UNDERGROUND WEAPON STORAGE!

EVL have even more weapons stored in an secret underground hideout. This time your mission involves much tougher opponents, although the overall object of the level remains the same: Kill everything in sight and reveal the henchman behind the firepower!







In part two of the level, the drivers are back for more, although this time they're armed with a digger! Again, shoot the driver to prevent an attack, and remember to shoot the barrels for an enemy-trashing powerful explosion. In fact, remember to shoot just about everything, because there's more hidden weapons to discover.

JUSTICE SHOT!

There's loads of ways to earn extra points in Virtua Cop, and probably one of the easiest is to take out the bad guys with a justice shot. This basically shoots the gun from their hand before they get a chance to use it, thus earning 500 points. A bullseye (hitting the bad guy in the middle of the target) will collect more points. Shooting a target more than once will also rack you up a high score, and will send your opponent spinning and reeling all over the place!



Well, this may be an underground weapon storage, but you'll begin the level in the warehouse in an attempt to break through to the hideout. In this level, there's loads more sweeping camera angles which really show off the power of the Saturn, and there's some even more impressive vehicles, such as this truck which is driven towards you in a most menacing manner. Shoot the driver to prevent the truck from advancing!

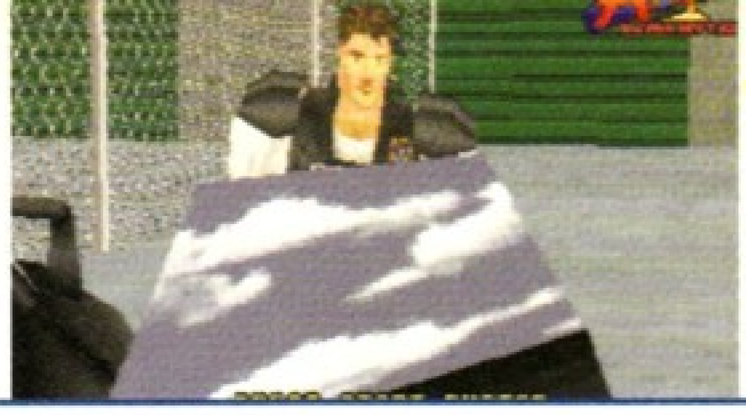


The final part of this level takes you on a whistle stop tour of the gang's underground, meandering hideout. After racking up an horrendous body count in the corridors and causing massive explosions left, right and centre, you'll find yourself in an open space once more. Only to face King – Rambo look-a-like and mercenary thug. He's pretty impressed that you made it this far, but quickly proceeds to pour scorn and lobs half a ton of napalm your way. This time, he's not alone either – you'll face other gang members armed with grenades and shurikens while he goes for a rest behind packing crates. He returns several times though, and defeating him really takes some doing.











AM2 BRING AN ARCADE PERFECT CONVERSION INTO YOUR HOME!

Yep, just to prove that AM2 really did come up with the goods and there will indeed be NO compromise whatsoever, we've decided to stage a little test. On the left you'll see original shots from the arcade version of Virtua Cop and on the right, shots from the Saturn version taken from the same part of the game (or as near as is humanly possible). This proves beyond as shadow of a doubt that Virtua Cop IS arcade perfect. And with the extra Saturn features you could even argue that it's even BETTER than the original game!

SATURN

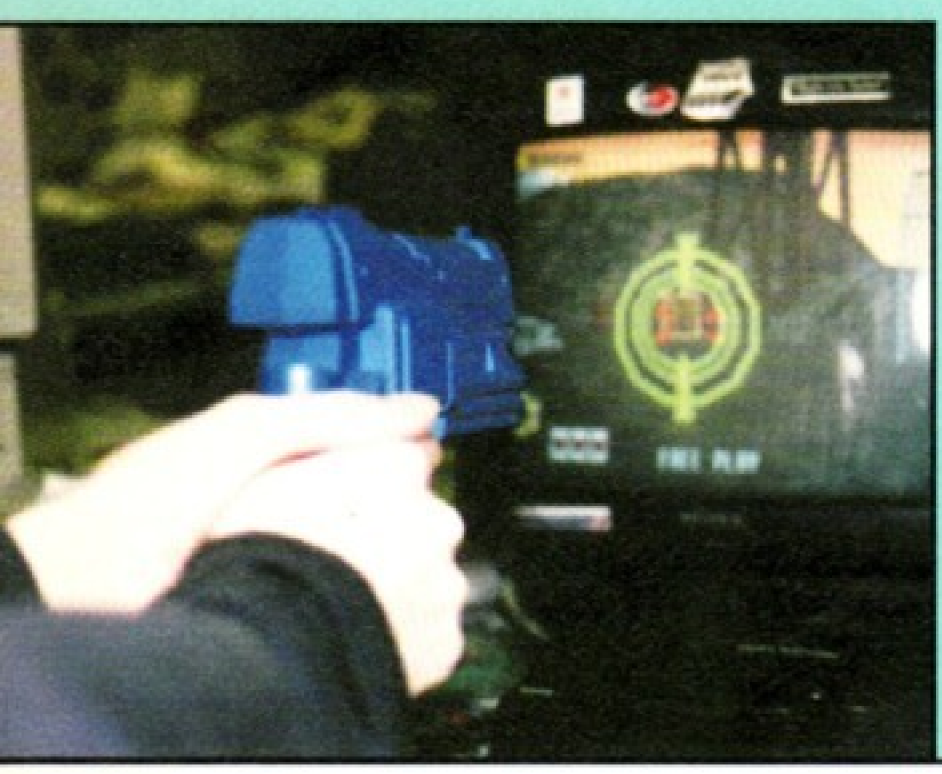


ARCADE



TWO CAN PLAY THAT GAME!

Yes, in time-honoured tradition of all good shoot 'em ups, Virtua Cop comes with its very own two player mode. Which of course means you'll need two guns to get the most out of it. And, er, it also means that it might end up as a rather expensive affair. But, enjoyment it definitely delivers – if there's one way you should definitely play the game, this has to be it. In fact, playing Cop with the guns makes life much easier as, it has to be said, that playing with the joypad can be quite cumbersome at times. Anyway, as for the two player game – it's the same as the one player game except that you play it with two people, which makes things loads more exciting!

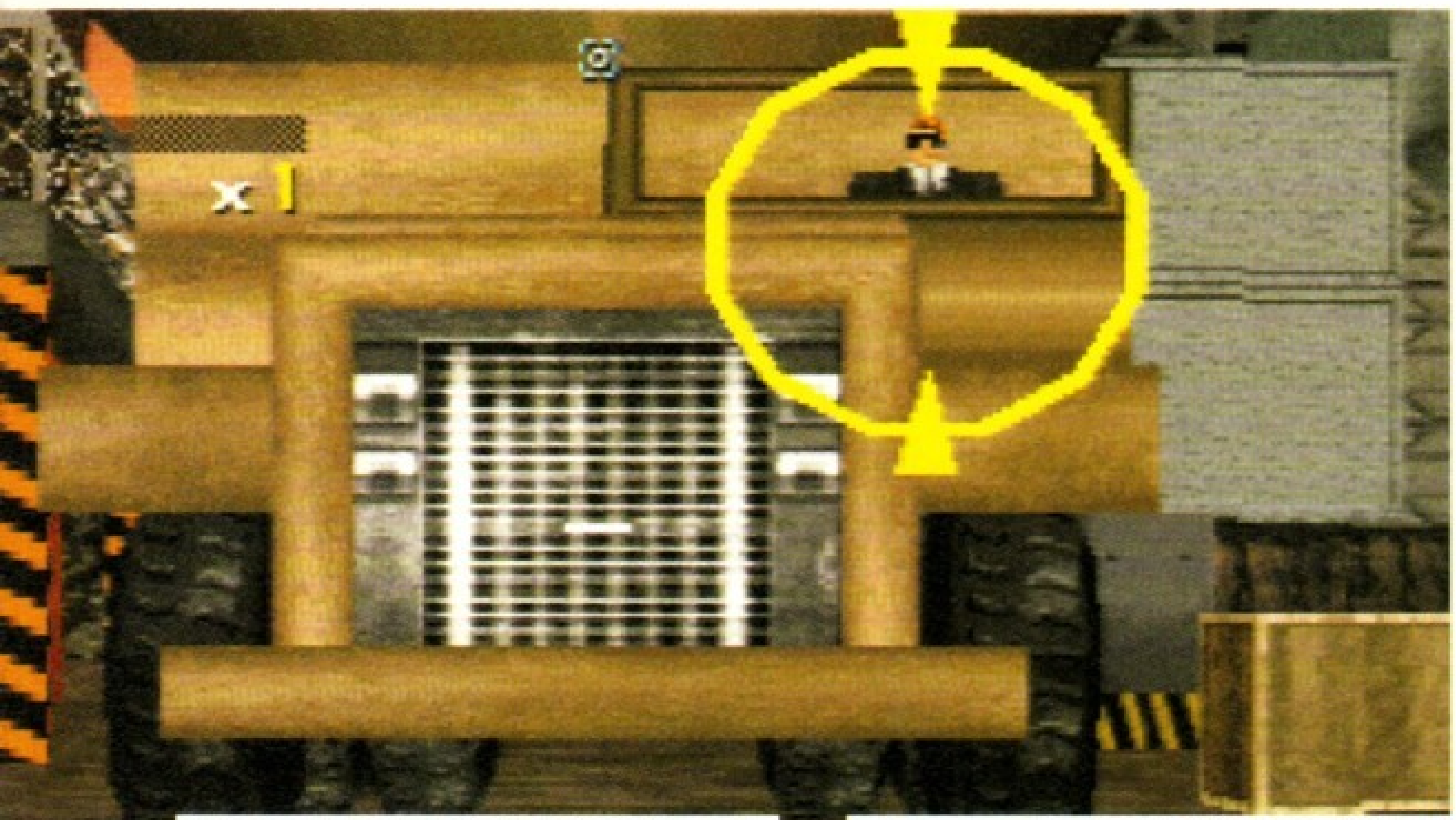




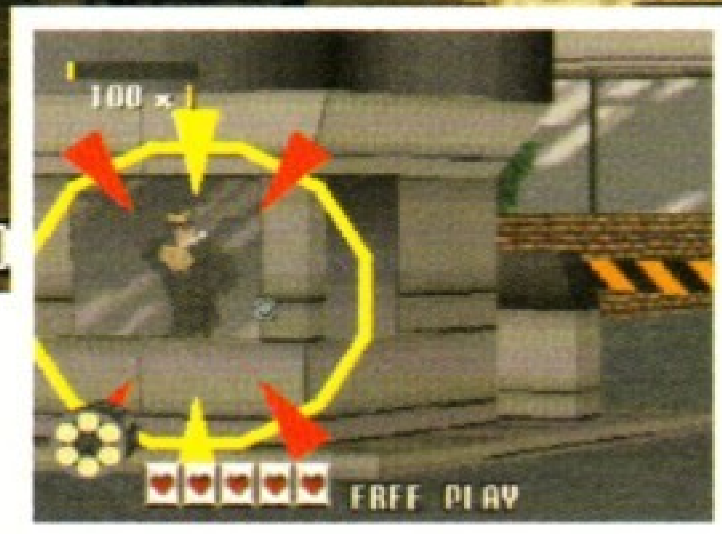












TARGET!

If you've never played Virtua Cop before, you might be wondering what all the funny circles on the screen are. Well, it's fairly simple. When the target is in two halves and showing green, it means the EVL cronie is preparing to shoot you. When it turns amber there's still time to shoot before he manages to fire at you. However, when it changes to red, it means that the character is taking a shot. The target will change back to green once you've shot the character.











AM2 – THE INTERVIEW!

Out in full force at the recent Jamma arcade show held in Japan, AM2 were also on hand to talk to the Japanese press about the development of Virtua Cop. Here's what chief developer, Takashi Isono had to say in a recent Japanese interview...

Q: You were a complete success at the Jamma show. How much has the game progressed since then?

A: We need to complete the ending of each scene as in the arcade version. For example, the bosses who are arrested appear with Rayge and Smarty [that's the name of the two cops], then drive off in a police car at the very end. We are trying to develop the ending for all three scenes. Each ending should take less than a minute. [This has now been completed - SSM].

Q: How about the sound effects?

A: They will be exactly like the arcade version. The sound effects will be built into the machine, whereas the background music comes from the CD. The BGM is slightly longer in duration.

Q: Have the graphics of the game improved as well?

A: We are trying to keep to the quality of the arcade. If three of us agree for improvement, then we try to modify the graphics. Effects such as the change of light when one moves from outside, which is dark, into the parking lot, which is bright, is copied on to this version too.

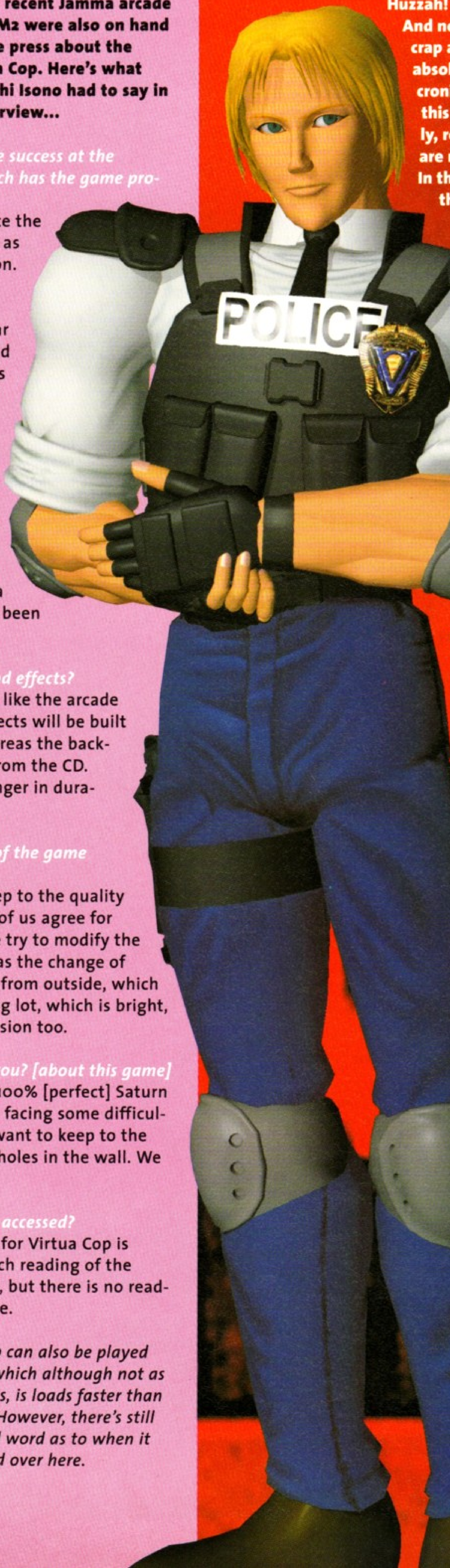
Q: How confident are you? [about this game]

A: We are aiming at a 100% [perfect] Saturn conversion, but we are facing some difficulties at this stage. We want to keep to the level of leaving bullet holes in the wall. We are trying our best.

Q: How often is the CD accessed?

A: The volume of Data for Virtua Cop is known to be heavy. Each reading of the data takes 4-5 seconds, but there is no reading of data in one stage.

Incidentally, Virtua Cop can also be played with the Sega mouse, which although not as much fun as the guns, is loads faster than using a joypad. However, there's still been no official word as to when it will be released over here.



LEVEL THREE: GANG HEADQUARTERS!

Huzzah! You've made it to the gang's headquarters! And now you're gonna die!!! Well, if you're really crap at games, that is. You see, this level is absolutely, without a doubt, rock hard. EVL cronies are hiding all over the place, and with this being an office and all, it makes hiding really, really easy. However, it's not as if the crims are really scared of you or anything. Far from it. In the first part of this level, you'll find yourself smack bang in the middle of the headquarters' ground floor. However, even though by rights everyone who works in this building is a part of EVL and therefore naturally guilty , you still have to avoid blasting the slimy employees. There aren't too many of them hanging around the outside of the building though, so the first scene at least, is a frenzied blasting session. In fact, this level in particular should take many of you back to your youth when hiding behind garden walls with toy shotguns was the order of the day. It's not long before you'll find yourself in the building's basement where hundreds of gunners are lying in wait.







Yep, sure enough EVL are waiting for you en masse at the top of the lift – this time the men are kitted out in radioactive suits and waste no time in pumping a few rounds in to you! There's time for a quick look at a statue of Sarah (you'll have to be quick) before you'll face your final confrontation with the big man, Boss, who's determined to beat you within an inch of your puny life...











...And that's about as much as we can tell you. After all, we don't want to spoil the end of the game for you, do we? All we can say is that just when you think you've got rid of him, you can be guaranteed that he'll be back for more...

VIRTUA COP IS REVIEWED ON PAGE 70

Dural going to die!







After seven and a half months of intensive coding, **the Saturn division of Sega Amusement Machine Research and Development Department 2 has finally completed what some thought would be impossible – *a near perfect conversion of the monster coin-op,* Virtua Fighter 2. Still regarded as the *greatest 3D combat game* over a year since it was first released in Japan, VF2 is an *unmissable fighting experience...* And it's nigh-on identical on Sega Saturn. RICHARD LEADBETTER reports.**

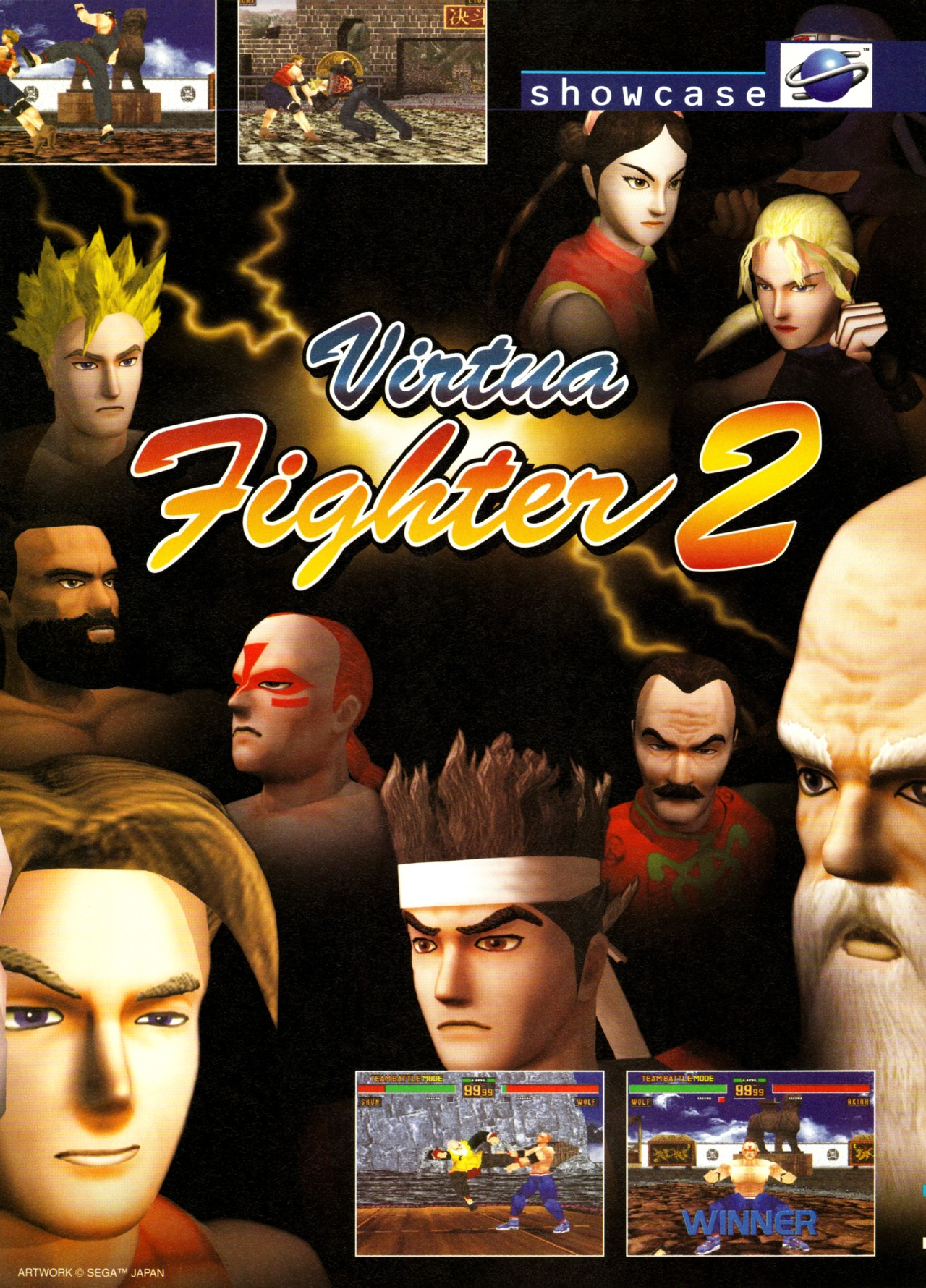


SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE HAS JUST TAKEN DELIVERY OF A COMPLETED COPY OF SEGA'S VIRTUA FIGHTER 2, AND IT'S A REVELATION. FROM A TECHNICAL STANDPOINT, THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO MATCH IT. THE GAME HAS ALL THE SPEED AND THE FLUIDITY OF THE COIN-OP ORIGINAL, RUNNING AT 60 FRAMES A SECOND IN SUPER-HIGH RESOLUTION - SO HIGH IN FACT THAT WE HAD TO UPDATE THE WAY WE TAKE FRAME GRABS IN ORDER TO GET THE GAME'S FULL DETAIL ON THE PAGES OF THE MAGAZINE WITHOUT THE GAME LOOKING BLOCKY AND RUBBISH. THE ACTUAL FRAME RATE OF THE PRODUCT WILL CHANGE WHEN IT IS ADAPTED TO THE PAL SATURN, BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT AM2 ARE TAKING EXTRA TIME WITH THE PAL CONVERSION, EVEN THOUGH IT MEANS THAT THE GAME WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL JUST AFTER CHRISTMAS.

But the proof of the pudding is in the gameplay, and we can report that Saturn Virtua Fighter 2 is nigh-on identical to its arcade brethren. The controls are perfect and any one au fait with the coin-op version should have absolutely no problems getting to grips with the game. Quite simply, you probably won't believe that this is a Saturn game you're playing when you load up Virtua Fighter 2. It looks and plays far in advance of anything seen yet - on both Saturn and PlayStation.

The question is now, can anybody out there match the technical prowess of AM2? Virtua Fighter 2 is state-of-the-art when it comes down to next generation gaming - bar NONE. It shows the world what Saturn games should be about and puts the majority of contemporary releases in the shade in terms of audio-visuals and gameplay. And obviously, we want more of the same.

Still, enough ranting. On with the game. >>


Virtua
Fighter 2
TEAM BATTLE MODE
SHUN
WOLF
TEAM BATTLE MODE
WOLF
AKIRA
WINNER

WHAT'S NEW?

We've had some letters in our mailbag wondering if they should buy VF2 if they already own the first game (which just about everyone does). For the record, the answer is a resounding "YES!". In every way the game is superior to the older version and the recently released Virtua Fighter Remix, which although impressive is nowhere near as good as the sequel.

We've already touched on the resolution of the game, which is far in advance of both Remix and the original, and the speed - the sequel is also twice as fast and as smooth. But more important still is the gameplay. As well as incorporating two new characters, Shun and Lion, VF2 boasts around three times as many moves as the first game.

These haven't just been used in the characters' fighting techniques. The entire game is just a lot more realistic. Rather than players just falling over when they get hit, you'll see them being tripped over, staggering back from a hefty blow, looking over their shoulder when the opponent slips behind them. It's all rather more impressive.

You can also look forward to more detailed backgrounds. Although not true 3D like the arcade original, the game uses a number of scaling parallax backdrops to show depth, making it by far the most visually impressive 3D combat game on any home system.

Make no mistake: VF2 isn't just an EA Sports style "update" - it's an almost completely new, totally reprogrammed game. And it's bloody great, you hear?









SOUNDING OFF

The sound of an AM2 product is never something that the team leaves until last, hoping that there might be enough memory left over to get some nice noises. AM2's sound team have been working on the game's effects and music since before the Summer.

"When we were doing the VF1 conversion, the arranged version of the background music was the final version. But this time we are able to include both the original music from the arcade version and also the arranged music for the Saturn," reveals AM2's Mr Nakamura. The Saturn tunes aren't just remixed versions of the coin-op music either: "Instead of adding an arranged bit, we are creating variations of the original music," claims Mr Mitsyoshi of the sound department.

In addition to the music, all of the effects from the original arcade game appear to be present along with the fighters' taunts at the end of each round. Although the sound effects don't appear to be quite as crisp as they were in VF1, there is a lot more variety, and unlike a lot of Saturn games, the effects are in full stereo.

















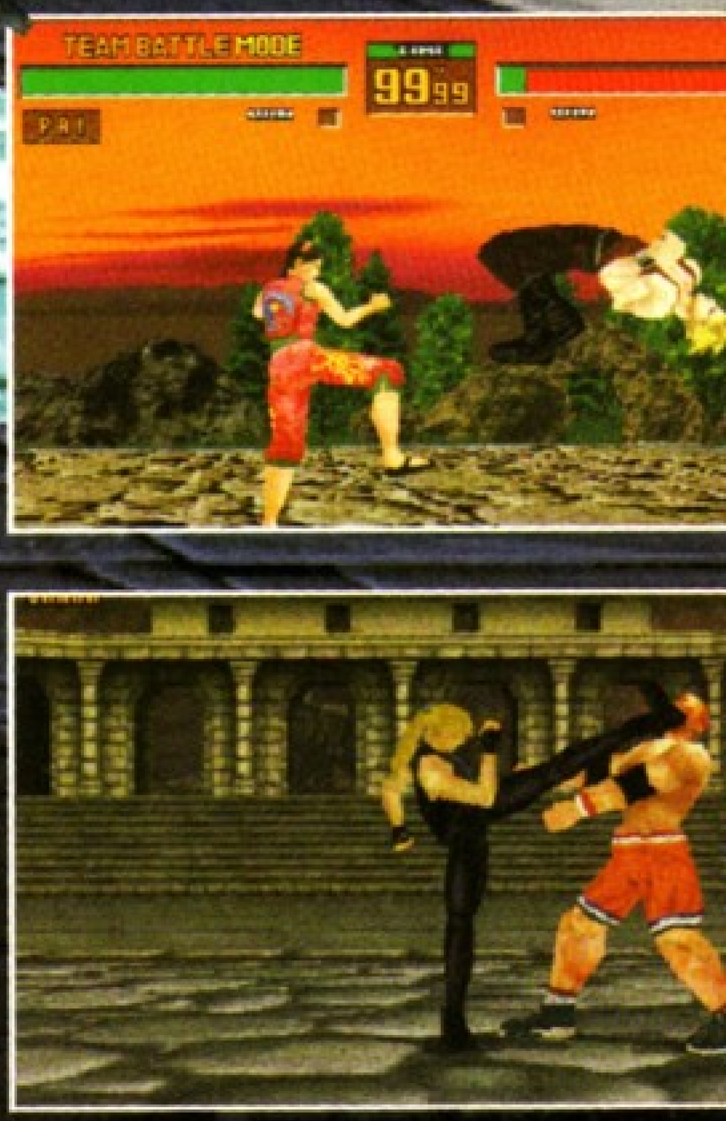




HOW IS IT DIFFERENT TO THE ARCADE VERSION?

The Model Two arcade board on which Virtua Fighter 2 is based costs around 20 times that of a Sega Saturn, so it's only to be expected that some things will be different from the original arcade game. "A part of the reverse technique and stage background are difficult to convert to Saturn," confirms Chief Programmer Keiji Okayasu, "Though there are reverse techniques which we will not be able to include, we are also testing new [Saturn-specific] techniques which will be added. I am not going to tell you any more about these new techniques, but it will be like the horse in Daytona USA."

The bottom line is this - some of the background features such as Shun's bridge are just too polygon-concentrated to be included in the Saturn version of Virtua Fighter 2 without compromising the speed of the gameplay, so they have been dropped, along with a few very obscure moves - in their place you can expect more game variations (more on this later) and extra bits to sustain interest, such as a player-controlled Dural and other goodies.







And don't come back! Shun gets the beating that he deserves. After all, he is a filthy, drunken old man. By rights, he shouldn't be in the tournament at all.





Virtua Fighter 2

THE FIGHTERS

Virtua Fighter 1 boasted eight different characters (nine if you include Dural) and over 700 different movements. For Virtua Fighter 2, the character roster has gone up to eleven (again counting Dural) but the includes over 2,000 motion-captured moves - an incredible achievement for the Saturn conversion. It would require about 500 pages to show off each individual move for each fighter, so we're concentrating instead on what's new.

AKIRA YUKI

Humiliated by Kage in the first Virtua Fighter tournament, Akira has trained hard and boasts the lion's share of the new moves. Just like the first game, Akira concentrates on close-range combat and super-powerful moves. Also of note is the plethora of new throws that Akira has in his repertoire. He now has two throws that enable him to get behind his opponents before he strikes.

PAI CHAN

Pai was always the character that specialised in lightning fast combo-orientated surgical strikes, and this again has been fortified in Virtua Fighter 2 with a frankly huge array of different PPPK combinations. Her ability to counter-attack, turning a foe's attack against them with a throw has also been boosted in the sequel, making Pai quite a powerful opponent.

LAU CHAN

Lau was the champion of the first Virtua Fighter tournament and defends his title in style in Virtua Fighter 2. His combo skills remain second to none - in fact, they are now even more powerful - his ability to "float" a foe is now even more pronounced. Faster and armed with even more deadly moves, Lau Chan is again a hot contender of the Virtua Fighter tournament.

JEFFRY McWILD

The Australian fisherman enters the second Virtua Fighter tournament for the prize money alone, with which he wants to buy a new boat after his last one was destroyed. Extra throws are the order of the day for Jeffry, who can drain huge amounts of energy with just one attack. Similar to Wolf, but faster and deadlier, Jeffry is devastating in the right hands.

WOLF HAWKFIELD

Wolf has entered the championship to show how accomplished his wrestling skills are, and like Jeffry, he intends to win mostly through his incredible throws. He's been given plenty more of them, along with techniques to pound the opponent once they're on the ground. His lumbering nature may be the only obstacle between him and the championship.

KAGE-MARU

Although he defeated Akira in VF1, Kage did not succeed in infiltrating the sinister J6 syndicate, who he holds responsible for the untimely deaths of his parents. Armed with a variety of new techniques which give him a move for every occasion, Kage is a dynamic fighter who is second only to Akira in overall effectiveness in this sequel. Put simply - a deadly opponent.

JACKY BRYANT

Having been involved in an Indy Car crash for which the J6 Syndicate were responsible, Jacky believes this is what stopped him from winning the first VF tournament. Now restored to total health, Jacky's fiercely proud of his speed and his versatility. Although somewhat monotonous to play, Jacky can prove to be exceptionally dangerous when played by the expert VF master.

SARAH BRYANT

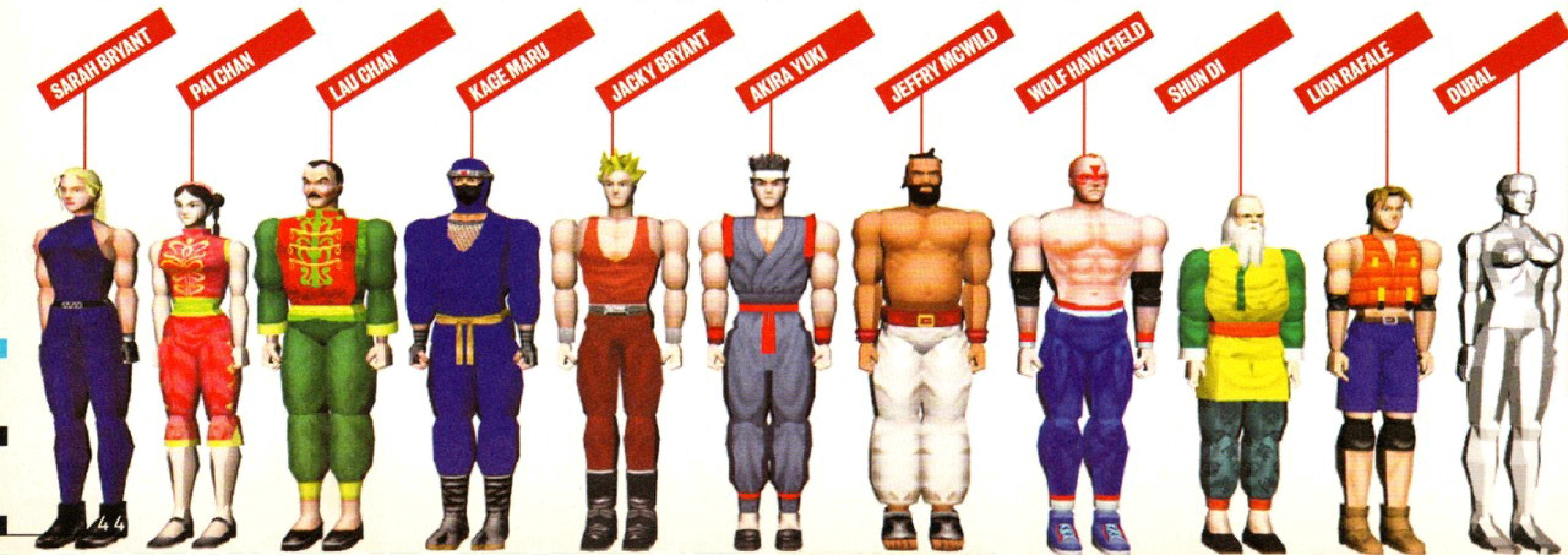
Still brainwashed by the J6 Syndicate and still out to kill Jacky, Sarah has spent the months between tournaments honing her own incredibly aggressive fighting style to its very limits. Extremely fast and gifted with powerful techniques, most of Sarah's innovations are in her leg work, which is now far more versatile and unpredictable. A favourite choice in the VF community.

LION RAFALE

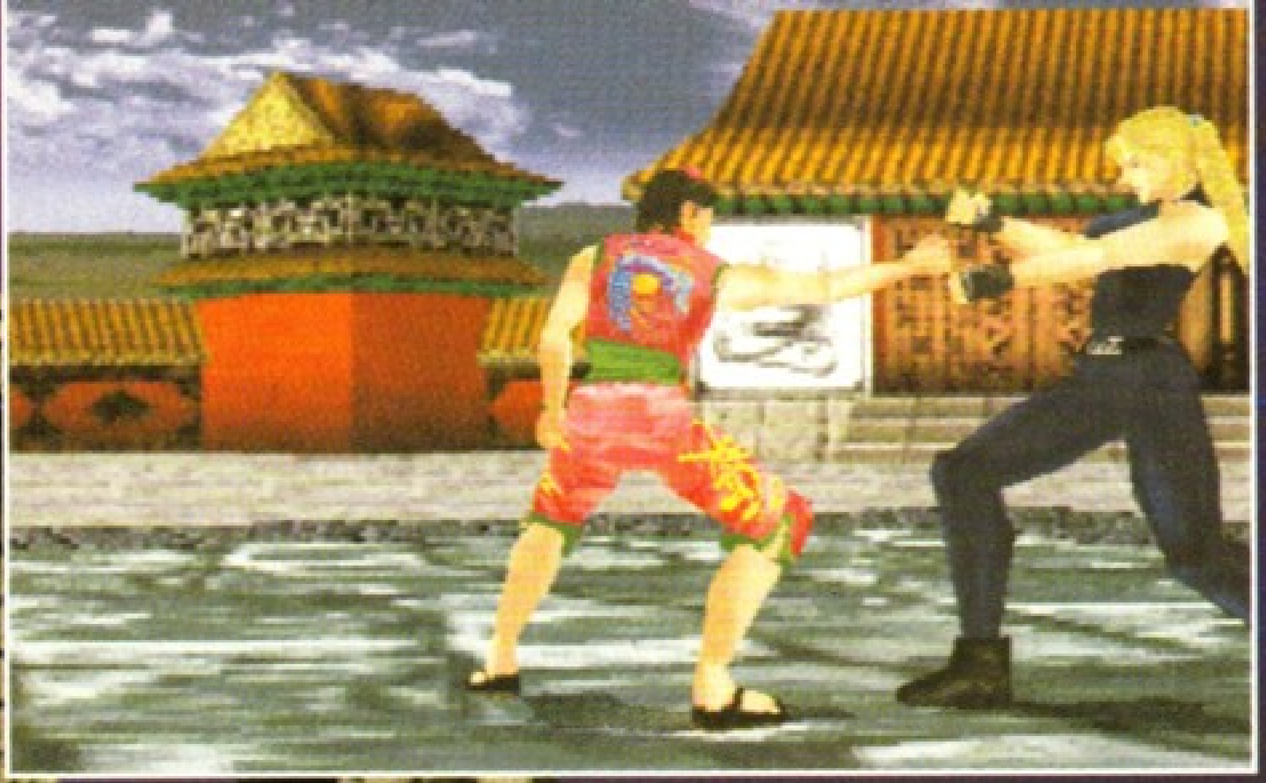
Son of a powerful French industrialist, Lion is the faster of Preying Mantis Kung Fu - a swift, unpredictable art that's very, very different to the style of the other Virtua Fighters. Lion is young at 15 years of age, meaning that he isn't very powerful, but his speed more than makes up for this. One of the more visually pleasing characters in the new game.

SHUN DI

An old martial arts instructor who enters the tournament on a whim, curious to see how his drunken antics measure up to the competition. Shun enjoys a drink throughout the proceedings and allows the alcohol to relax his body, while keeping a sharp mind (that's the idea any way). Again, like Lion he is extremely difficult to anticipate. He's also quick to rise when knocked over.





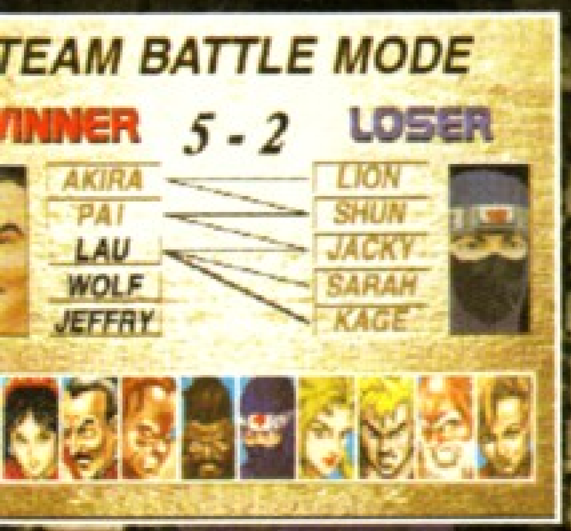


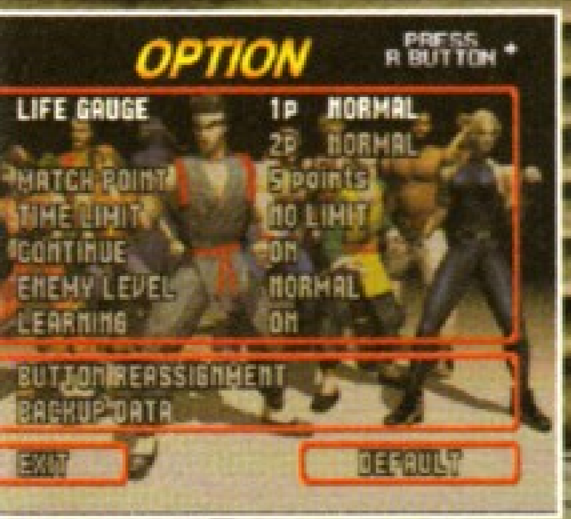
Nope, it's not a variation on the "one-potato" game often played by youngsters. It's Sarah. And she's about to beat the living daylights out of Pai. You know, just for the fun of it.





The graphics in Virtua Fighter 2 far surpass the original game and even go as far to make it look really old-fashioned. The detail on the characters and the backgrounds is absolutely astounding.











Erm, difficult to tell who's going to come out top here. However, with Shun's drunken capers, he makes for an extremely tough and agile opponent. Not to mention hilarious.





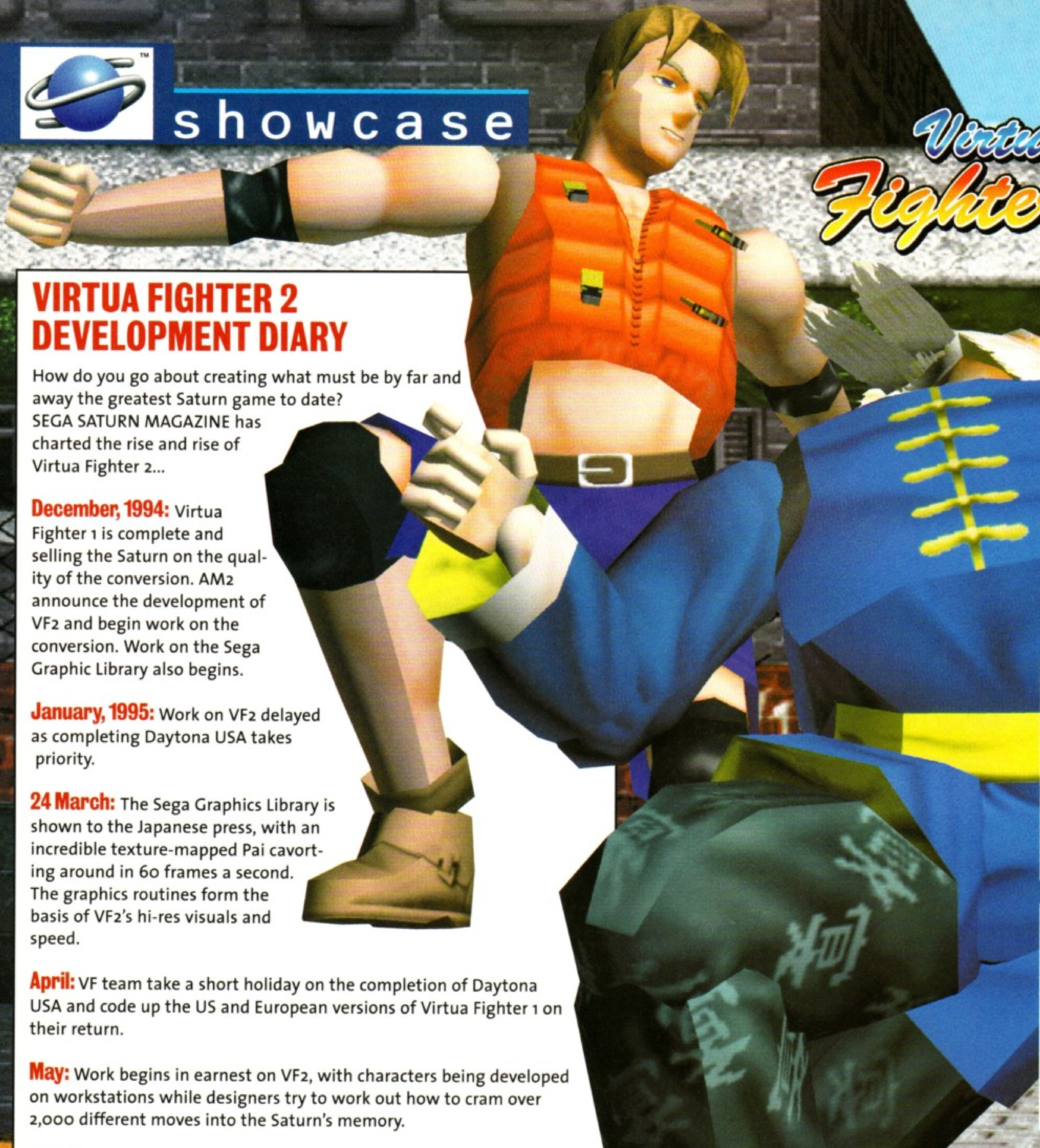
Wolf gets to work on an unusually cumbersome Akira. In fact, Akira is probably one of the toughest fighters in the entire tournament.







Virtua Fighter 2



VIRTUA FIGHTER 2 DEVELOPMENT DIARY

How do you go about creating what must be by far and away the greatest Saturn game to date? SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has charted the rise and rise of Virtua Fighter 2...

December, 1994: Virtua Fighter 1 is complete and selling the Saturn on the quality of the conversion. AM2 announce the development of VF2 and begin work on the conversion. Work on the Sega Graphic Library also begins.

January, 1995: Work on VF2 delayed as completing Daytona USA takes priority.

24 March: The Sega Graphics Library is shown to the Japanese press, with an incredible texture-mapped Pai cavorting around in 60 frames a second. The graphics routines form the basis of VF2's hi-res visuals and speed.

April: VF team take a short holiday on the completion of Daytona USA and code up the US and European versions of Virtua Fighter 1 on their return.

May: Work begins in earnest on VF2, with characters being developed on workstations while designers try to work out how to cram over 2,000 different moves into the Saturn's memory.

June: Pai, Lau, Lion and Shun form the basis of two demos shown at the Tokyo Toy Show (and on last month's cover-mounted video). The speed and resolution astounds visitors.

July: The data compression has been completed and the designers try out their Saturn versions of their new VF2 characters in the Tokyo Toy Show demos.

August: The basic game engine is complete, all of the characters' movements are present along with first versions of the fighters and their backgrounds. Shown in Berlin IFA and London ECTS shows to amazement from visitors.

September: Hit recognition is included - VF2 is now in a playable state and goes on display at the Tokyo JAMMA arcade show, where AM2 gauge reaction to their work and make adjustments accordingly.

October: General tidying up takes place, the replays are added and work begins on the Saturn-specific options. Adjustments and play-testing are also taking place at this point.

November: The final licks of polish are made to the gameplay and the Saturn-specific modes. The final music is added and the game is nigh-on ready for its December 1 Japanese release. Japanese pre-orders alone total 1.5 million units!









Once again, Akira manages to defeat Shun, and Sarah makes tidy work of Wolf in team battle mode – a new game option found in Virtua Fighter 2.







MODES OF PLAY

Virtua Fighter 2's options screen is huge, offering various different game variations. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE takes you through what's on offer.

ARCADE MODE

A near arcade-perfect version of the original Model Two arcade game, with only tiny compromises made.

VS MODE

The simple two-player mode first premiered in Virtua Fighter 1. Much the same as two players being at the console in arcade mode, but here even the winner can change character after vanquishing his foes.

RANKING MODE

The computer judges your performance as you play through the normal arcade mode game, and evaluates your antics. Boring, repetitious moves cost you points whilst variety in your gameplay reaps the rewards.

EXPERT MODE

One of the more exciting features. The CPU notes and retains any incredible techniques or combinations that it thinks will add to its own intelligence. This was a hidden mode in the coin-op original. An on-screen indicator shows when the CPU uses a technique it has learned from the player.



TEAM BATTLE MODE

Two players each choose a team of five players, who then square off in an elimination type scenario. A concept which did really well in SNK's King of Fighters 95 and is equally superb in VF2.

WATCH MODE

A very simple non-interactive mode that sees the computer choosing two players and then literally fighting itself, while you "watch". Hence the name.



WHEN IS IT OUT?

The Japanese have announced a release date for their version of Virtua Fighter 2, which is due on December 1 - before Christmas. If you own an official Sega Saturn, it would be best to wait until early January for a decent PAL conversion - otherwise it's letterbox displays and slower speed if you're using an adapter, which really doesn't do Virtua Fighter 2 justice.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 2 IS REVIEWED ON PAGE 72

DAYTONA USA THE FINAL LAP!

SEGA DAYTONA USA TIME ATTACK

TIME ATTACK RULES

1. You must be racing in Time Lap Mode – in the usual game, you can slipstream behind other cars to get extra speed. We think that this is an unfair advantage.
2. You must be using the official UK release of Daytona USA on a UK Saturn. In converting the game to PAL, AM2 changed the time base slightly, so sorry to all import owners but you won't be able to enter this competition.
3. We only want your best individual lap time on any of the three courses, or all three if you're good enough. You can enter as many times as you like for any of the tracks.
4. You have to be racing on NORMAL mode, not GRAND PRIX or ENDURANCE.
5. If you end up with the best lap time, we'll want video footage of it in the form of the replay mode. You don't have to send it in with your best time but hang on to it. We'll contact you if you win.

PLEASE send your times in on the back of a postcard. NOT in an envelope. Any entries sent in envelopes will be burnt immediately. Don't phone us up either, because there's nothing we detest more than a bunch of whining lame gamesplayers.

Send your entries to: DAYTONA TIME ATTACK, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. BY DECEMBER 1ST!!!



With only one month left until the winner of our Daytona Time Attack challenge is announced, the entries are still coming in thick and fast. However, only a few of you measly gamesplayers out there have managed to better the times sent in last month. As the on sale dates of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE have been jiggled about somewhat in recent months, we're going to give you FOUR WEEKS to knock your gaming abilities into shape and send us in some decent times. The results will be announced in our February issue (out in January), NOT in our Christmas issue as was previously stated. If you've managed to come top in your category (which we sincerely doubt, considering the state of most of the entries), you'll be receiving a call from our good selves requesting that you send in video evidence of your time. DO NOT SEND US A VIDEO NOW. The final date for entries to be accepted is December 20th, so you'd better be quick!

BEGINNER: SHORT OVAL 777
Win an exclusive Saturn Jacket, the Arcade Racer steering wheel and Virtua Stick!

- 15" 35 – John On, South Ockendon
- 15" 46 – Neil Cottee, Swadlincote
- 15" 48 – Jason Clark, Lancashire
- 15" 48 – Keith Aggett, Newton Abbott



ADVANCED: DINOSAUR CANYON
Win an exclusive Saturn Jacket, the Arcade Racer and 10 Saturn games!

- 40 " 20 – M Reay, West Midlands
- 40" 85 – Jon Schultz, London
- 40" 87 – Tony Chambers, Sheffield
- 40" 87 – Andrew Webber, Exeter



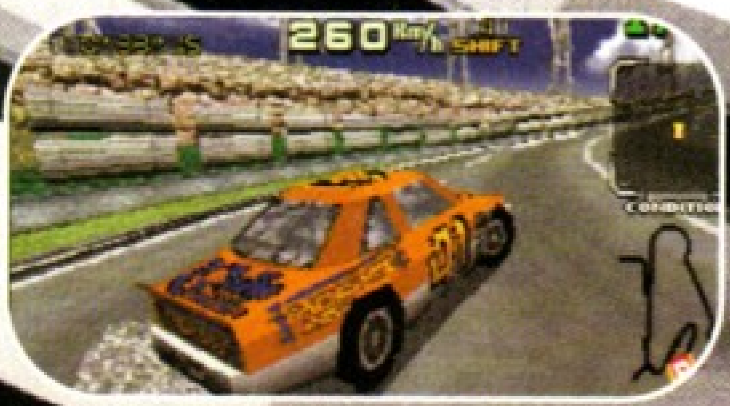
EXPERT: SEA GALAXY
Win an exclusive Saturn Jacket, the Arcade Racer and A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF SEGA'S SATURN GAMES!

- 1'26" 83 – Ben Ford, Cleveland
- 1'26" 89 – Harjit Singh, Huddersfield
- 1'27" 66 – Barry Lavelle, South Yorks

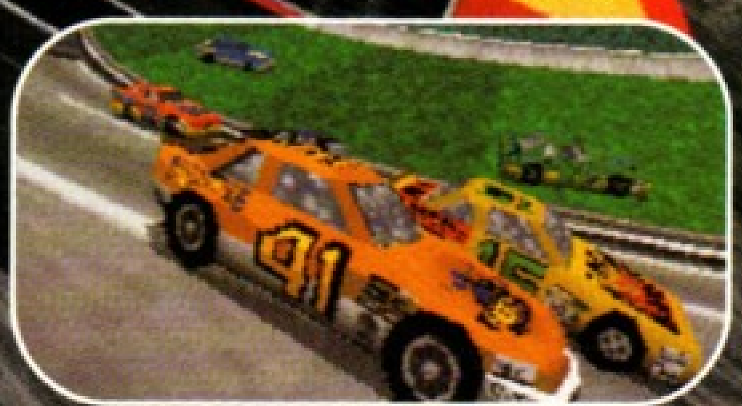


Well, a much better attempt all round than last month's feeble entries, but there's still loads of room for improvement. So get to it, doughnut boy!










IT'S BIGGER,
THICKER,
AND HARDER
Than me.
THAN HIM!
COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES
ISSUE 169
OUT NOW
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA

DEAR SATURN MAG, I'VE HEARD THE



Right now there seems to be a lot of worry and fright about whether or not the Saturn has what it takes to cut the gaming mustard. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE puts a stake in the heart of rumour-mongering...

War is hell. And in a retail war it's the consumers who are on the front line. And that means you, ya knuckleheads. Since you're reading SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE it's fairly safe to assume that you either have a Saturn already or are *that* close to buying one. But there are undecided thousands of potential console owners out there who are now the unwitting targets of a marketing barrage. And it's not just the sinister cult of advertising that's messing with everyone's minds. There's a whole world of conjecture and misinformation out there ready to snag the unsuspecting. But there's more to it than most people think.

MY GOD! A BREEZEBLOCK!

We can't deny the Saturn started life with a bit of a bad rep. True enough when the console was launched in Japan premium quality software was not exactly abundant. In fact, apart from good old Virtua Fighter and Daytona (which now looks amazingly dated), there was pretty much no premium quality software. Instead there were things like Gale Racer and Tama – Adventurous Ball in Beeple Land or whatever it was called. Basically not the sort of games you'd take home to meet your mother. Unless you wanted her to get your dad to throw your delinquent Saturn out of the house, shouting "And don't come back, ya lousy bum". But then no-one in this country should really have given a fig, save for those evil import owners trying their hardest to undermine the worldwide Sega hierarchy in the name of anarchism. Sadly though, as happens with these things, the press were all too eager to pounce on the nascent 32-BIT machine in the interests of a story and began bandying their prophecies of doom for the Sonic wranglers. Of course, this wouldn't have been any story if it weren't for the imminent arrival of Saturn's big rival, the PlayStation. In the interests of continued sales it was of course best for publishers to fuel such rivalry as early and as vehemently as possible.



Sega's second wave of Saturn games will offer an even greater depth of play than Daytona USA, and the graphics will be completely awesome!



SATURN COULDN'T HANDLE ALEX KIDD... ...IS THIS TRUE?

SATURN! B..BUT HOW..?

In order to scupper a repeat performance upon European launch, Sega took the surprising step of releasing the UK Saturn three months early. And while they may have clocked up some alright sales, it wasn't perhaps the rampant success they could have hoped for. The rush launch might have been a good idea, but they forgot to tell anyone they were doing it. This meant the press didn't have time to gear up or start previewing the official software lists and retailers didn't have the time to hype the new wonder machine on the block. So the Saturn slipped out quietly in June with most people none the wiser – at a price point regrettably inflated by an unusually high Yen (which caused financial chaos in Japan and emergency currency-type meetings across the globe). Poor old Sega. And then whaddya know, Sony with their huge mega-corporation budget go and launch a couple of months later with a fully-hyped machine, carefully selected "best of Japanese" games selection and high-profile ad campaign. The basts. But since then, things seem to have evened out. Sega's awesome arcade reputation exceeds even the celebrity and loyalty afforded them by the Megadrive, and lots of players realised that the games they wanted to see and play in their own homes were mostly produced by an AM division. Daytona wasn't exactly pretty, but has sold outstandingly well on the back of its depth of playability, something sorely lacking in its closest PlayStation competitor Ridge Racer. Panzer Dragoon is as visually stunning as any "next generation" game seen so far. Virtua Fighter, the bundled game, is still the best beat 'em up on the market. And then the new SGL OS arrived.

FIVE LIES ABOUT THE SATURN

1. **It can't handle texture mapping.**
2. **It's crap with polygons.**
3. **All the official games are letterbox format.**
4. **The Video CD picture quality is poor.**
5. **You can make toast with it.**

GNN.. IF I CAN... JUST GET THAT... NEW OS...

First demonstrated at the Sega new year strategy press conference in Japan this was an all-new operating system which makes programming the serial processors of the Saturn a way easier task than ever before, using a fraction of the power of the original Saturn operating system. The first game to use the new Sega graphics library had to be Virtua Fighter 2, and work which had already been completed on a Version 1 convert was scrapped. Instead Sega displayed a two-character non-interactive demo which was still incredible enough to set every little software tongue wagging furiously. Suddenly Sega had forced everyone to recognise them as the major player in home gaming.

The Saturn is still coming in for a hard time, not just from biased or jaded press types but also from biased and jaded consumers and even biased and jaded developers. But that's only to be expected in a pre-Christmas market-establishing tussle of the scale currently underway. But now there's plenty of solid evidence to support Sega's enthusiasm. All you have to do is look at the games. Goddamn you – LOOK at them. As you'll see from our Showcases of the finished Virtuas Cop and Fighter 2 the Saturn is capable of far more than the detractors would have you believe. All scurrilous rumours of an under-powered or outdated machine have been well and truly scotched. Only the truly blinkered could deny the Saturn's wide slice of the chance cake for sales supremacy.



And this isn't counting the multimedia extension which, we have to say, is actually pretty fine. And which doesn't exist on any other home console. Except the CDi, and no-one's got one of those. Indeed, it's doubtful even Sega will make much of a fuss about the Video Card until the Saturn has a big enough user base to flog plenty of films to (probably after Christmas). Once the card presents a large consumer target opportunity you should expect to see plenty of new multimedia applications, more like the gubbins available for PCs and Apple Macs than the dismal Kids On Site-esque Mega-CD examples. And don't forget the looming internet connector kit too. But all that's in the future. Right now the Saturn presents itself as a gaming choice for the new generation. Current Saturn owners should rest easy in the knowledge that their machine has the power and technology to survive and thrive through to the next-next-generation, whilst non-owners should make their purchasing decision worry-free.

showcase

Three years have passed since the launch of the *original Thunderhawk.* Or thereabouts. We can't remember that well. But here's the *sequel on Saturn.* And it's ace. So here's Rad's Showcase.



Lock-on those missiles and destroy all targets. Or you could use your machine-guns. Or cluster bombs. Or any of your other hi-tech weaponry.



THE AMERICAN ARMY SLANG FOR A HELICOPTER IS A WHIRLYBIRD. AT LEAST IT WAS BACK IN THE SEVENTIES TV SHOWS I PICKED IT UP FROM, HAVING NO REAL PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE AMERICAN ARMY. BUT WHERE DID THEY GET SUCH A NAME FROM? WAS IT PERHAPS LEONARDO DAVINCI'S RENAISSANCE-AGE DESIGN FOR AN EARLY HELICOPTER (BEFORE THE ARMENIAN WORD "COPTER", MEANING "HE WHO FLIES WITH ROTORS" ENTERED COMMON USAGE)? AAH, WOULD THAT IT WERE THAT SIMPLE, HUMBLE READERNIKS. WHIRLYBIRDS ARE ACTUALLY A MUCH-COVERED-UP ELEMENT OF US MILITARY HISTORY. THEY ARE IN FACT THE GIANT HOLLOW AVIANS USED BY MARTIANS TO TRANSPORT THEMSELVES ACROSS SPACE. THE TERM ORIGINATED BACK IN THE FORTIES WHEN WW2 PILOTS SAW STRANGE FEATHERED APPARITIONS AT 20,000 FEET. ALL RECORDS OF THESE SIGHTINGS ARE NOW LOST, BUT IT'S BELIEVED THAT THE SUBSEQUENT APPEARANCE OF OUR OWN MECHANICAL WHIRLYBIRDS IS THE RESULT OF ALIEN COMMUNICATION WITH GOVERNMENTS, IN RETURN FOR PRECIOUS RAFFIAWORK (THE MARS EQUIVALENT OF PLUTONIUM ORE). DAVINCI IS THOUGHT TO HAVE TRADED PORTRAITS OF MARTIAN ROYALTY IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS HELICOPTER, PARACHUTE AND VACUUM CLEANER DESIGNS – THE LATTER BASED ON THE ANATOMY OF THE RED PLANET'S POPULAR HOUSEHOLD PET KNOWN AS AN OO'VAYR.





But helicopters are here to stay, having earned their own special place in the hearts of humanity with their cute habit of showering napalm onto unsuspecting foliage. And Core Design, the Derby-based moguls of gaming, love them so much they want to give all Saturn owners the chance to fly one, and kill >>



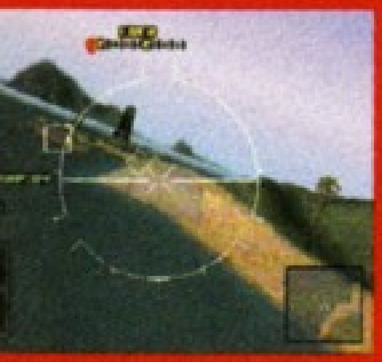
Another mission ends in failure. Such sadness and enduring pain. The free world shudders at your demise.











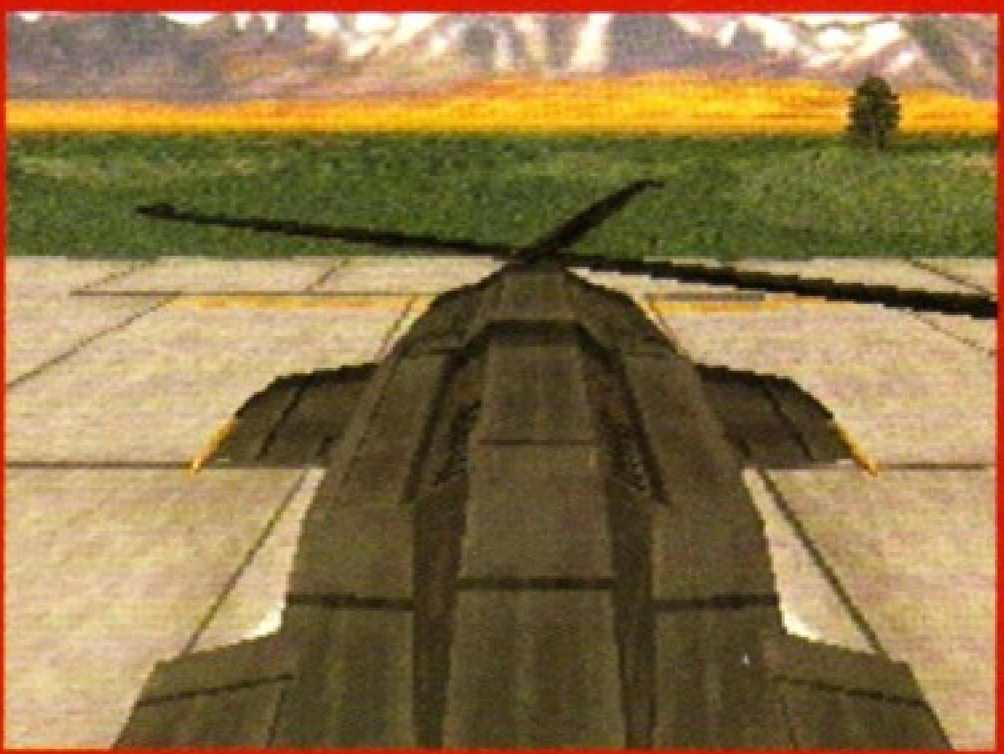












Helicopter Load of this!



>> people with it. They've already got a good chopper pedigree, having produced the original Mega-CD Thunderhawk. Thunderhawk saved the Mega-CD. Except it didn't really. But if anything could have saved the Mega-CD it would have been Thunderhawk. It was ace, and it was also the first game to actually use the capabilities of the machine to do something which wasn't an FMV intro. The Saturn sequel follows a similar formula (although it's not quite so jaw-drop groundbreaking on 32-BIT). The game throws you in as a last hope for eight military world policing campaigns across the globe.





Which of these hotspots you fly to first is up to you, and the only way you'll find out which are the hard ones is to try them all. Each campaign is divided up into a number of sub-missions. Each sub-mission has two major combat considerations. The first is the Primary Target or Targets. These are buildings/enemy units/whatever that you're required to destroy before leaving the area. The second point of interest is the Mission Objective. This is the perhaps less important bonus purpose of the sortie, and could be anything from rescuing an important hostage to breaking a siege whilst escorting an aid convoy. In reality only one of these operations needs sorting before hitting the trail in order to still qualify for the next level. Indeed, if you're in danger of dying and don't reckon you can do either you're still able to flee the scene, but it costs you a demerit. Three demerits and you're court-marshalled and grounded. Which sounds like a pretty good idea with all these wars on. I mean, you're better off in prison than flying alone and unsupported over crisis flashpoints, waiting to be shot down and killed. haven't the programmers ever read Catch 22 for God's sake? Anyway, that isn't the point. It's only a game after all. Although the complexity of the controls may convince you otherwise. Your aircraft is capable of all the flying tricks of a real-life machine. So you can increase or decrease your altitude or move forwards and backwards with up and down on the D-pad (and the C and Z buttons in the case of altitude). There are also two ways of making sidewards movements. Banking swings your helicopter around like an aeroplane, circling in the requested direction. However, a regular press of the D-pad simply slides the rotor-booty to the flank, keeping the nose heading in the same direction. And if you're lazy and can't be arsed moving at all, why not just hover, and use the amazing skills of the Y button and the trusty D-pad to swing around in a rotation-stylee? The possibilities are endless. Just remember you meatheads – the only good sprite is a burnt sprite.







Explosions are beautiful things. And they never look more beautiful than in Firestorm, where there are many of different appearances. See them all by killing things.





The outside view looks really cool, and makes certain bits much easier.





Blast them from the skies!

The best thing about these war-type games is that they give you tons of gunpowder to play with. Firestorm, as its rather meaty destruction-centric title suggests, shoves unfeasible mountains of cordite into the sweaty unrepentant hands of any budding genocidal maniac. You're allowed to pick and choose your armaments between missions, selecting the combination of weapons you think will suit the task ahead the best (so pay attention to the mission briefing beforehand). The shooters on offer are as follows:

30mm CHAIN GUN: The only constant staple of your armoury. Unlimited ammunition, but pretty weak compared with the serious hardware.

AGM-214 HOMING MISSILES: Excellent for taking out airborne targets without too much of a fuss. Maximum payload of 28 missiles.



FFAR ROCKETS: Fired in doubles, these are powerful straight-shot missiles. hard to aim, but devastating in their effects. 116 missiles is the most you'll carry at once.



RCS-233 RUNWAY CRATERING SYSTEMS: Posh name for bombs. Ground those pesky enemy airforces by blowing up their runways. Four of them, anyway.

MK-84 500lb BOMBS: Big big bombs best used against ground installations (ie – buildings), although be sure to stay altitudinally clear of the blast.



MAC-874A CLUSTER BOMBS: Murder helpless army grunts in the hundreds with these vicious multiple-bombs last used in the Gulf War against real people.



MK-3 PENGUIN MISSILES: Kill flightless water fowl... not really, They're anti-ship bombs for aquatic-skimming missions. Only eight per payload, though.

RC-14 DEPTH CHARGE: Boats and submarines are a constant pest in undersea combat, so melt them into slag with up to eight killer depth charges.







Bomb towers and boats alike in this anti-piracy mission set in the South China Seas. Take out the hardline defences before aiming for the towers, though, or you'll find yourself sleeping with Davy Jones' locket.

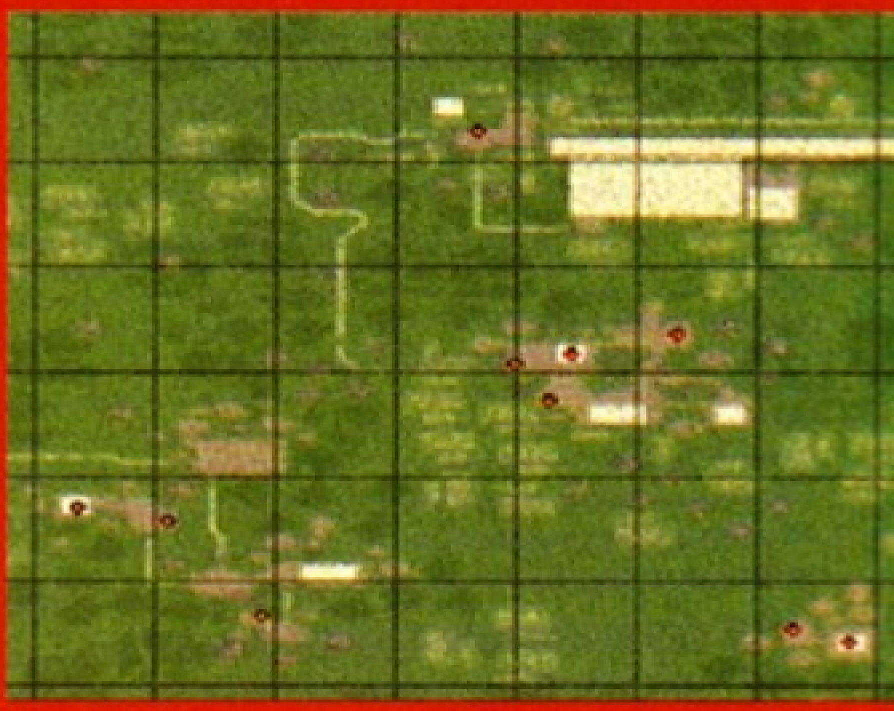


Guns to the left of them, guns to the right of them

Polygon technology has desensitised most gamers to the concept of multiple camera angles, which are now the rule as opposed to the impressive exception. But Firestorm shows just how well numerous view-points can be implemented into gameplay. Three different views are on offer, both inside and outside of your helicopter. The best of these is the Virtual Cockpit, which bungs you right in the pilot's seat. Thanks to the wonders of modern computers you're even given a realistic pilot's neck. Pressing the Left or Right shift buttons rotates your view 90 degrees, allowing you to gaze through the side windows at threats approaching from port or starboard. And if you're into optional extras, that Virtual Cockpit comes with or without instrument display.







This is one of the map screens which appears at the beginning of a mission, whilst a voice-over gives you the SP on your objectives.



Control freakishness

Your cockpit display is a complicated animal. As well as the usual status readouts you'd expect for ammunition, armour, compass and so forth there are a number of handy defensive aids. The map is useful for selecting targets (all ground objects are indicated, Primary Targets highlighted) and watching out for the mission boundary so you don't look like a deserter. At least not by accident. The radar is more useful in combat, as it shows, in a variety of colour-coded dots, all ground-based, airborne or missile-esque threats in short range. Possibly the most useful of the lot though has to be the Radar Detection Warning Display. Guess what it does. Go on. No, you're wrong. It tells you when an enemy weapon has locked on to your helicopter, by beeping incessantly and flashing the word LOCK on-screen. This is a good time to take shaky-twisty evasive action.

(Right) The Virtual Cockpit in action. The readouts are very good at keeping you alive if you take notice of them. But it's a little harder to see your enemies.



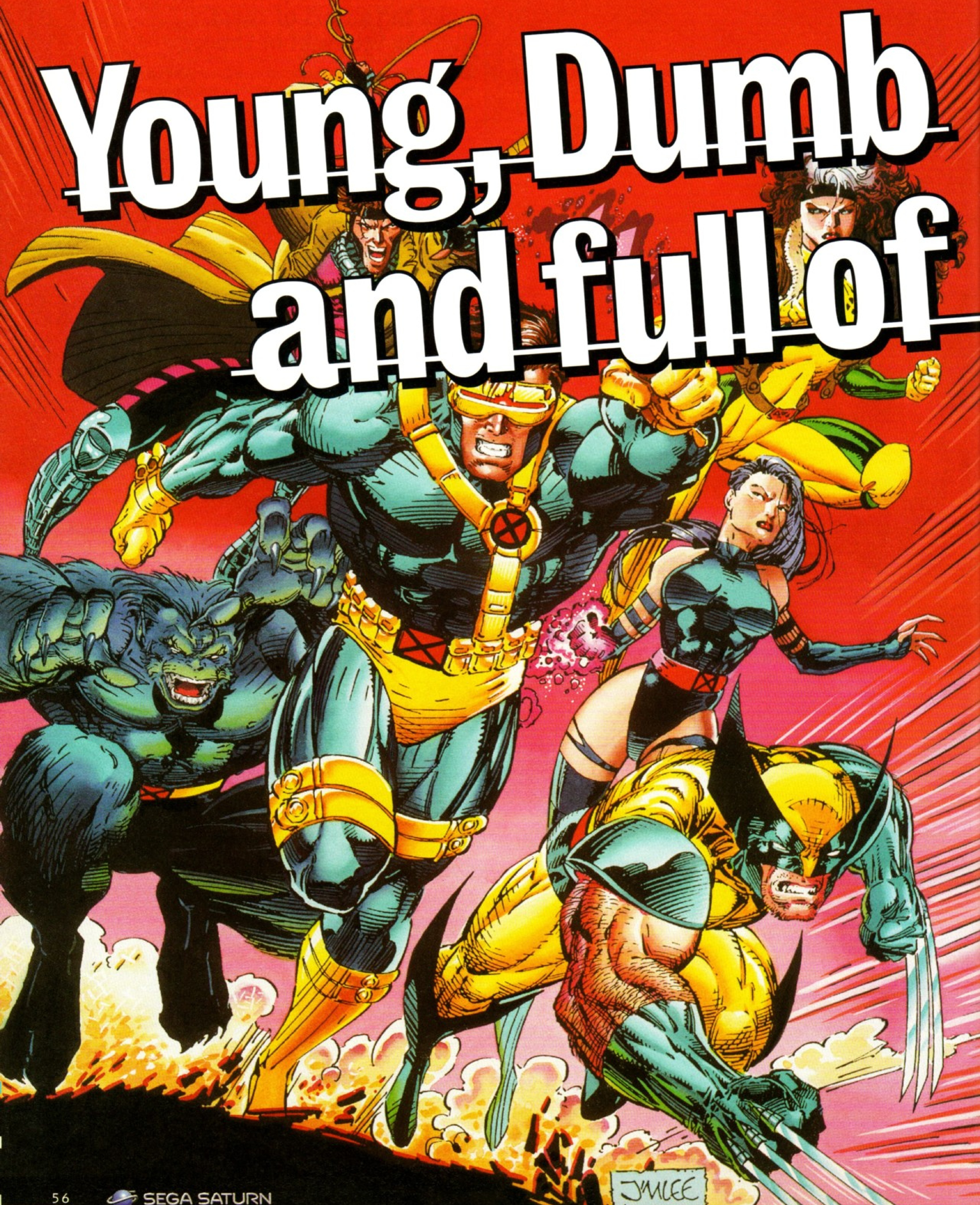








Young, Dumb and full of







As you can no doubt discern from these shots, all the excessive action and effects inherent in comic books have survived computer-stylee translation.



Radium!







There's just no stopping the X-Men. There's now a total of ***eleven monthly X-comics*** (all of which are best-sellers), an ***incredibly popular animated TV series,*** and two movies currently in production (one live action, one cartoon). What's more, ***X-Men: Children of the Atom*** is Capcom of Japan's first foray into the world of Sega Saturn software. Pausing only to don his gaudily coloured long underwear, RICHARD LEADBETTER joins the action.





If there is one thing that Capcom are famous for, it is their fighting games. Indeed, although the company has enjoyed a huge amount of success with games such as Strider, UN Squadron and Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, it must be said that the vast of majority of Capcom coin-ops released these days are one-on-one combat games. Sandwiched in between the company's various Street Fighter updates was a game that proved to be just as popular - and as playable - as the exploits of Ryu and Ken.

X-Men: Children of the Atom was the first X-videogame that successfully transplanted the characters across from the comics onto the screen. Whilst previous titles had merely been basic platform games with X-Men sprites, this Capcom game did an incredible job of capturing the characteristics of each X-Man. What's more, Capcom's newly mastered cartoon skills (honed to perfection on DarkStalkers - their previous fighting game) proved invaluable in giving the game a comic-like atmosphere. Finally, someone had done the X-Men justice.

In terms of playability, Children of the Atom proved to be quite a departure from Capcom. Although the Japanese firm had virtually invented the combo, others such as Rare and SNK had taken the concept further. Killer Instinct went to the extreme, with some characters able to pull off ludicrous 43-hit combos (making games boring sequential button-pressing exercises). Of course, these moves relied on special moves which inflicted multiple hits and Capcom took this concept and >>

introduced it into the X-Men game, only they made the combo system even more outrageous. Just about all of the characters are able to perform 20 hit combos, whilst there is a recorded Iceman technique that results in 80 hits for his hapless opponent!

X-Men: Children of the Atom has proved incredibly popular and Capcom have just announced a sequel to the game, Marvel Super Heroes, which should be hitting the arcades by the end of the year. Capcom have announced a firm commitment to the Saturn and already have plans to convert across their latest hit: Street Fighter Alpha. This should be on the streets by the beginning of next year and Vampire Killer (the follow-up to DarkStalkers) is scheduled for a December Japanese release.

At the time of writing, the game is being finished off in Japan for a proposed November 22 release. We've got hold of a special preview disc which contains all but three of the characters and can report that it is totally awesome! Expect a full review closer to the game's official release in 1996.











CYCLOPS



The leader of the X-Men's Blue Team is the most battle-experienced mutant in the game and as such, he's quite a whizz at hand-to-hand combat. Curiously enough, it looks as though he's been taking some lessons from Ryu and Ken as he can pull off a pretty mean dragon punch, known in this game as the gene splice!

His mutant powers involve liberal uses of his optic blasts - ruby-red beams of pure concussive force that can pulverise adamantium. He can fire his optic blasts in just about any direction in the game. Two super-moves are at his disposal - an awesome fixed direction mega-blast and a directional optic destroyer!

WOLVERINE



The most popular X-Man is represented in this game before the unfortunate incident when Magneto used his powers to remove Wolvie's adamantium skeleton. An adept fighter (in fact, probably the best) at hand-to-hand combat, Wolverine is by far the most aggressive fighter in the game and just about all of his moves can be chained together.

Although his six foot-long adamantium claws are potent weapons, this isn't the basis of Wolverine's mutant powers. As well as heightened animal-like instincts, Wolverine possesses a mutant healing factor which he can invoke as a super move. Also, two types of berserker rage can be called upon in an emergency.

PSYLOCKE



Technically speaking, Psylocke is the only English member of the X-Men. However, a bizarre incident a few years ago caused her body and soul to be merged with a female Japanese ninja (it could only happen in the X-Men).

Although her ninja skills give her an incredible athleticism and attacking skills, Psylocke's real power comes in the form of her psychic powers. As well as being an accomplished telepath, Psylocke is capable of summoning forth psychic power to confuse her opponent, or alternatively, just to fry their brains. To this end, she has a variety of devastating, telepathy orientated super-moves.

ICEMAN



Although he was one of the founding members of the X-Men and has a wealth of battle experience, Iceman is under-rated by his team-mates due to his flippant attitude and expressive sense of humour.

All of his battle skills revolve around his mutant powers, which enable him to freeze absolutely anything. As you can imagine, he can freeze his opponents or strike out at them with icey projectiles. His ability to summon ice at will means that he can also create shields which can withstand even Cyclops' optic blasts. One of his incredible super-moves causes him to flood the surrounding area with ice-bullets, which inflicts a huge amount of hits on his opponent.

COLOSSUS

TORPEDO DIVE!!!



Another of Professor X's second generation X-Men, Colossus has the mutant ability to turn his body into an almost invulnerable form of organic steel. In this form, Collossus can take a huge amount of punishment and also has superhuman strength second only to the Juggernaut.

It follows that he spends all of his fights in his armoured form, and he's best described as being the X-Men equivalent of Zangief from Street Fighter. Although incredibly strong, he's not very fast but has a huge array of devastating throws in his arsenal. One of his super-moves involves him becoming totally invulnerable for a short space of time.

SILVER SAMURAI

ENERGY STORM!!!



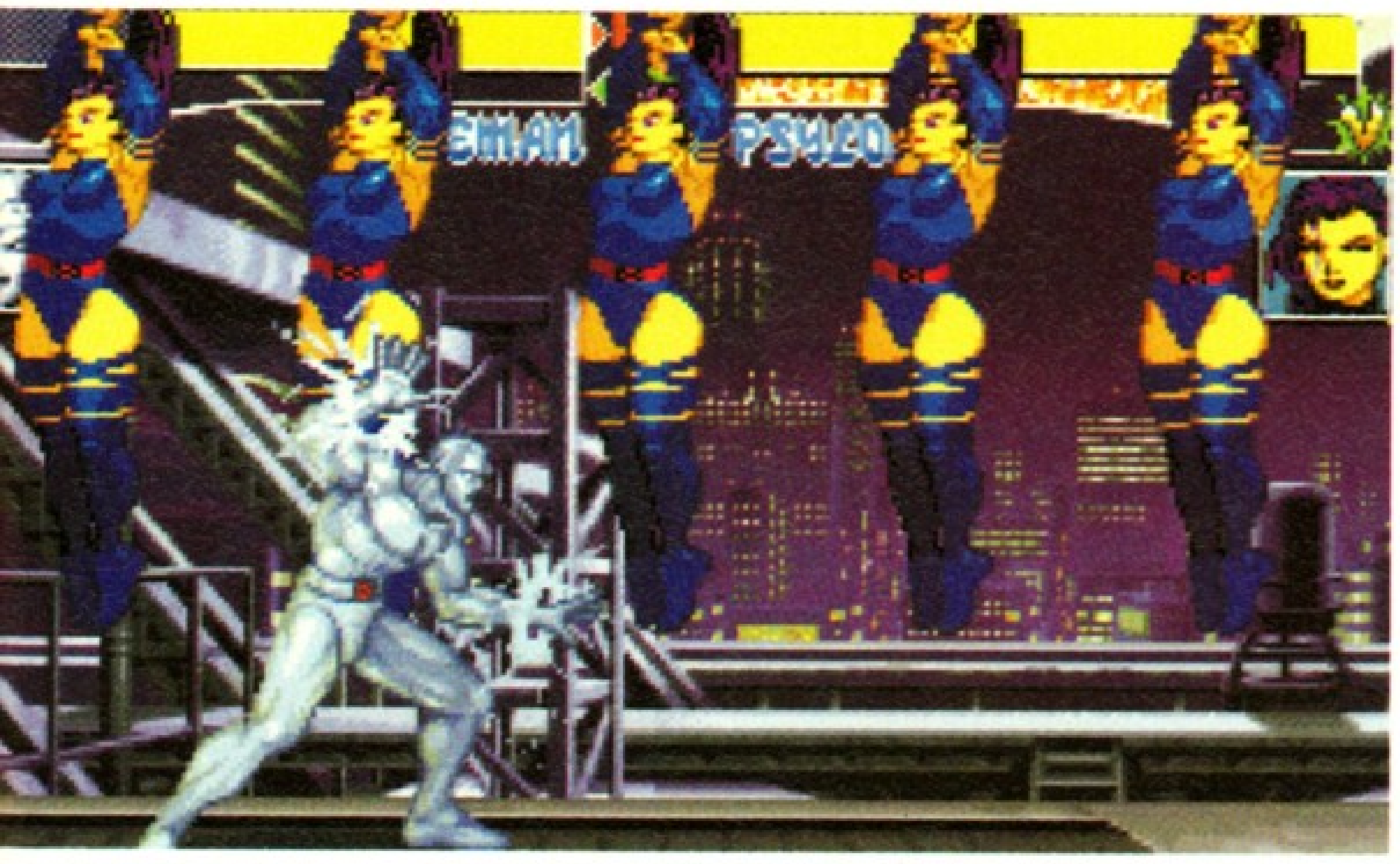
This guy is just one in a long line of super-villains who have a bitter vendetta against Wolverine. Kitted out in a protective suit of silver armour (hence the name), this guy has a huge range of martial arts related moves in his repertoire. Most of them are centred around his sacred samurai blade, however, Silver Samurai has also been known to throw the odd shuriken about. Although slow in relation to other characters, Silver Samurai is still quite fast considering his huge bulk.

OMEGA RED

OMEGA DESTROYER!!!



Although relatively new to the X-Men universe, he is yet another of Wolverine's blood enemies, burning with vengeance after Wolvie's actions left him buried six feet under for 30 years. Originally designed to be a Russian Super Soldier, Omega Red is constantly fighting against his mutant death factor. He can release this into the atmosphere to subjugate his opponents or he can sap his opponents' life force with the aid of his carbonadium tentacles. It is these tentacles (with their enormous reach) which makes Omega Red one of the most powerful fighters in the game and his super-move - the Omega Destroyer is one of the most incredible in the game, sapping huge amounts of energy even if the opponent blocks!



This might look like some kind of cyber-flashback to the days of Legs Eleven on Top of The Pops, with Iceman as some kind of slinky soul crooner, but it isn't. Thankfully. It's some fighting.





A mega-directional optic blast finds its mark.





It's a little bit cold for swimwear, isn't it?



INTRODUCING MARVEL SUPER HEROES

This new coin-op is a direct follow-up to X-Men: Children of the Atom. The game is based on an old Marvel crossover series called the Infinity War which featured heroes from all over the Marvel Universe coming together to fight an enemy of immense cosmic power.

What this basically boils down to is more one-on-one combat game action from Capcom, this time featuring heroes such as Spider-Man, Iron Man, the Hulk and Captain America. Some of the characters from the Children of the Atom coin-op have also made their way across including the ubiquitous Wolverine, Psylocke and Magneto (who is a controllable character, not just a boss this time).

Also included in the game are a whole-host of weapons dependent on the character you have chosen. Of course, old Spidey uses his trusty web-shooters and Captain America makes good use of his shield. Iron Man is kitted out with all kinds of technological wonders and the Hulk has been known to chuck the odd asteroid at his opponent in the new game.

This all sounds rather excellent and it's bound to be a hot contender for conversion onto Sega Saturn sometime in 1996.

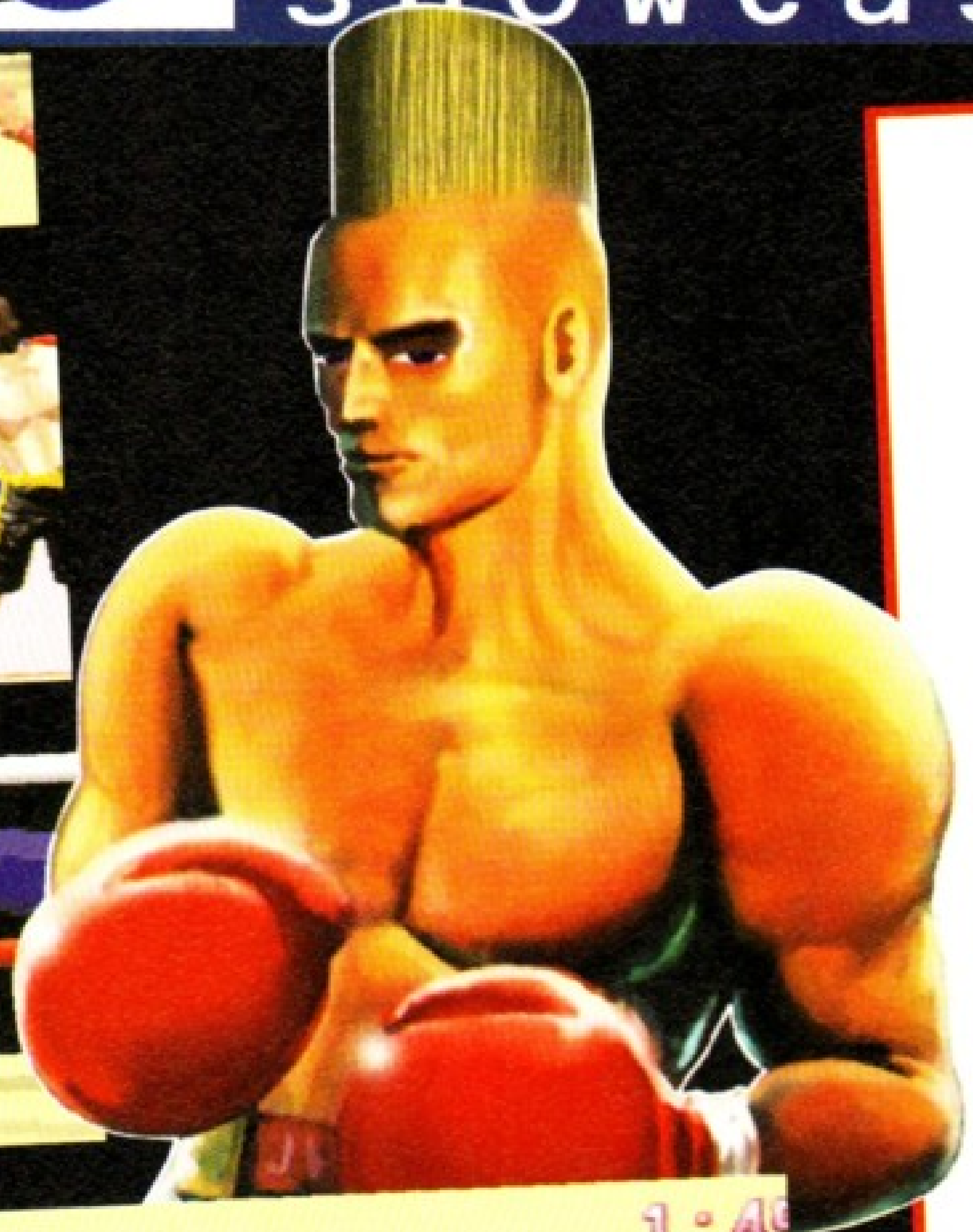






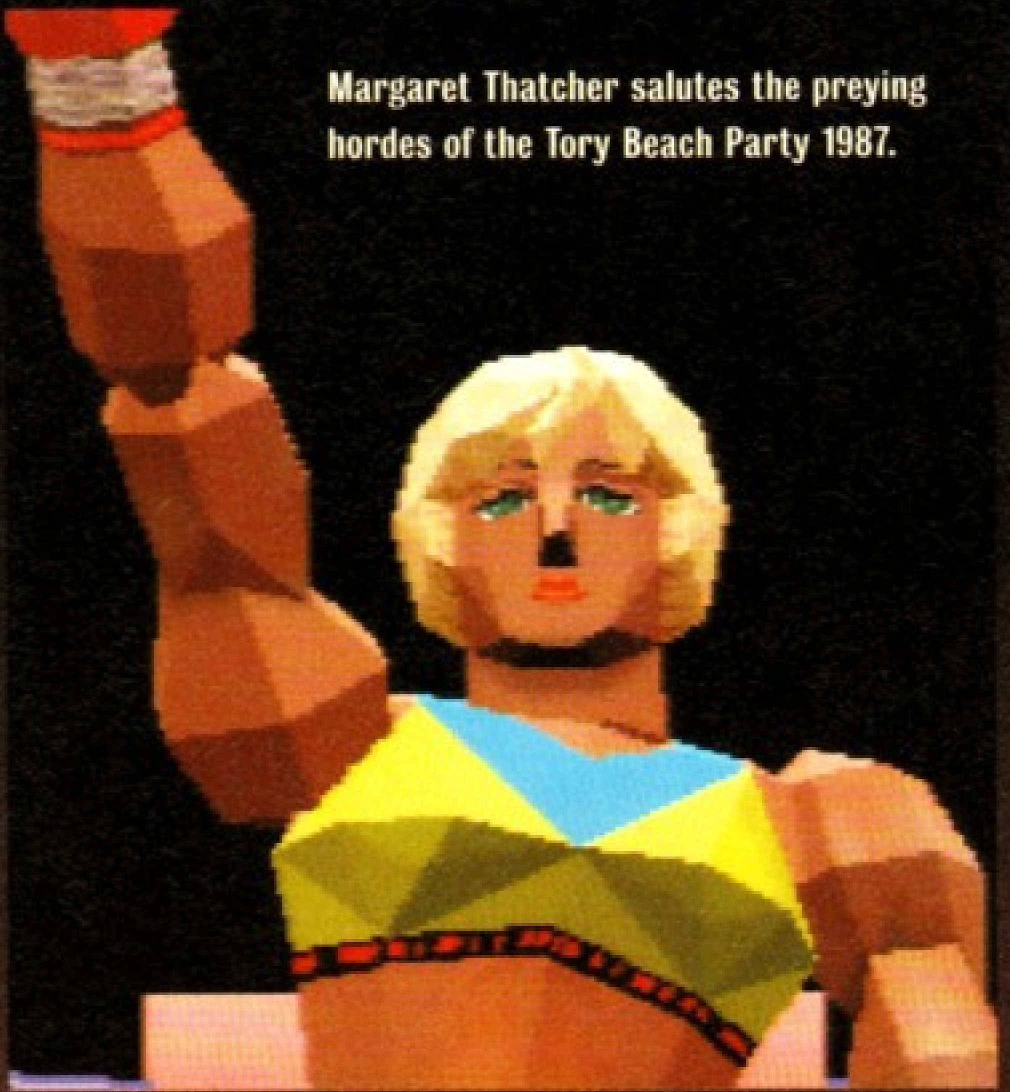






DIG For Victory





Margaret Thatcher salutes the preying hordes of the Tory Beach Party 1987.









Another impressive knockdown filmed in gorgeous Victory Vision! This is an in-game shot. Good, eh?

Given the *hordes of boxing games* available for all the other systems, it was only a matter of time before a Saturn publisher decided to launch the sport onto the *new Sega lovely*. And JVC have. And here's a Showcase by Rad about it.

You wouldn't normally associate boxing with brainpower. This might be because the majority of boxers act like complete pinheads and have a job which consists solely of battering someone else in the head whilst receiving a reciprocal brain-concerning beating. But that sort of attitude is just for cynical doubters who don't believe in God. No, of course the real reason you wouldn't associate boxing with brainpower is simply because of the bad rep this genuinely valid and not outdated or barbaric sport has been given by those evil videogame people.

Look at all the boxing games on the market. Most of them just chuck two over-developed blokes into an arena and have the players smack them about as they would in just any old beat 'em up. Of course, we all know there's loads more to it than that, so it's a big and bloody "Huzzah!" for Victory Boxing, the first Politically Correct game of the genre. It shows just what a caring and humane form of mass entertainment boxing is – hell, it even allows for mixed gender boxing matches, which can surely be only a couple of years away from WBC classification. But where Victory Boxing really excels in in its grasp of the finer points of pugilism and the strategy required both within and without the ring. >>







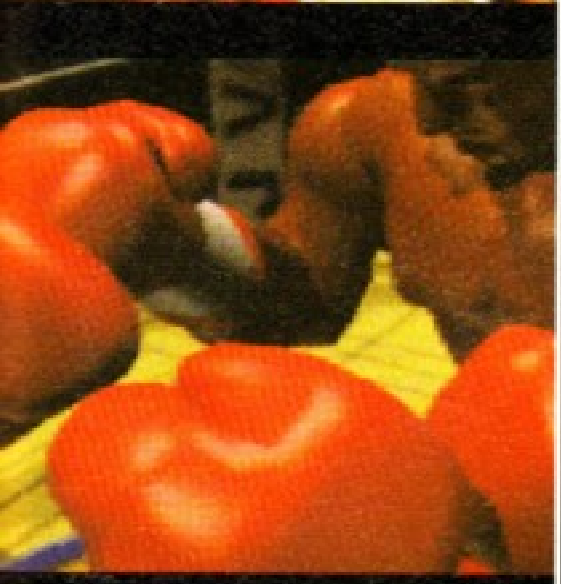
(BELOW) This rather sexy intro sequence kicks off the game. It shows a big fight with spectacular results.





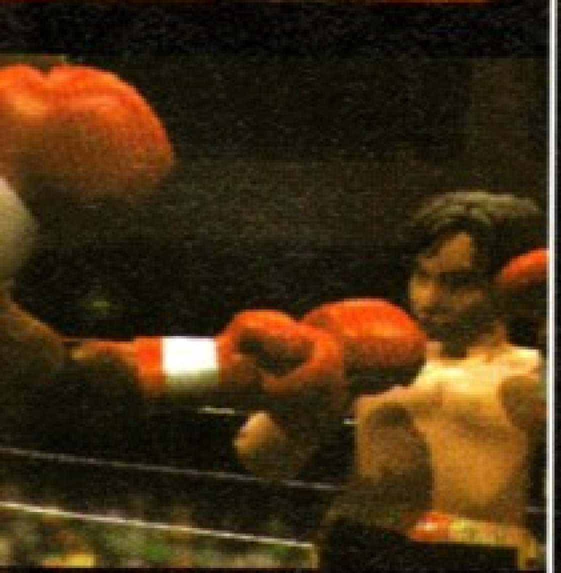
Time your punches right, or you'll open yourself to a vicious counter-attack, as this brown-haired chap seems to have done above. He's in for a biffing.



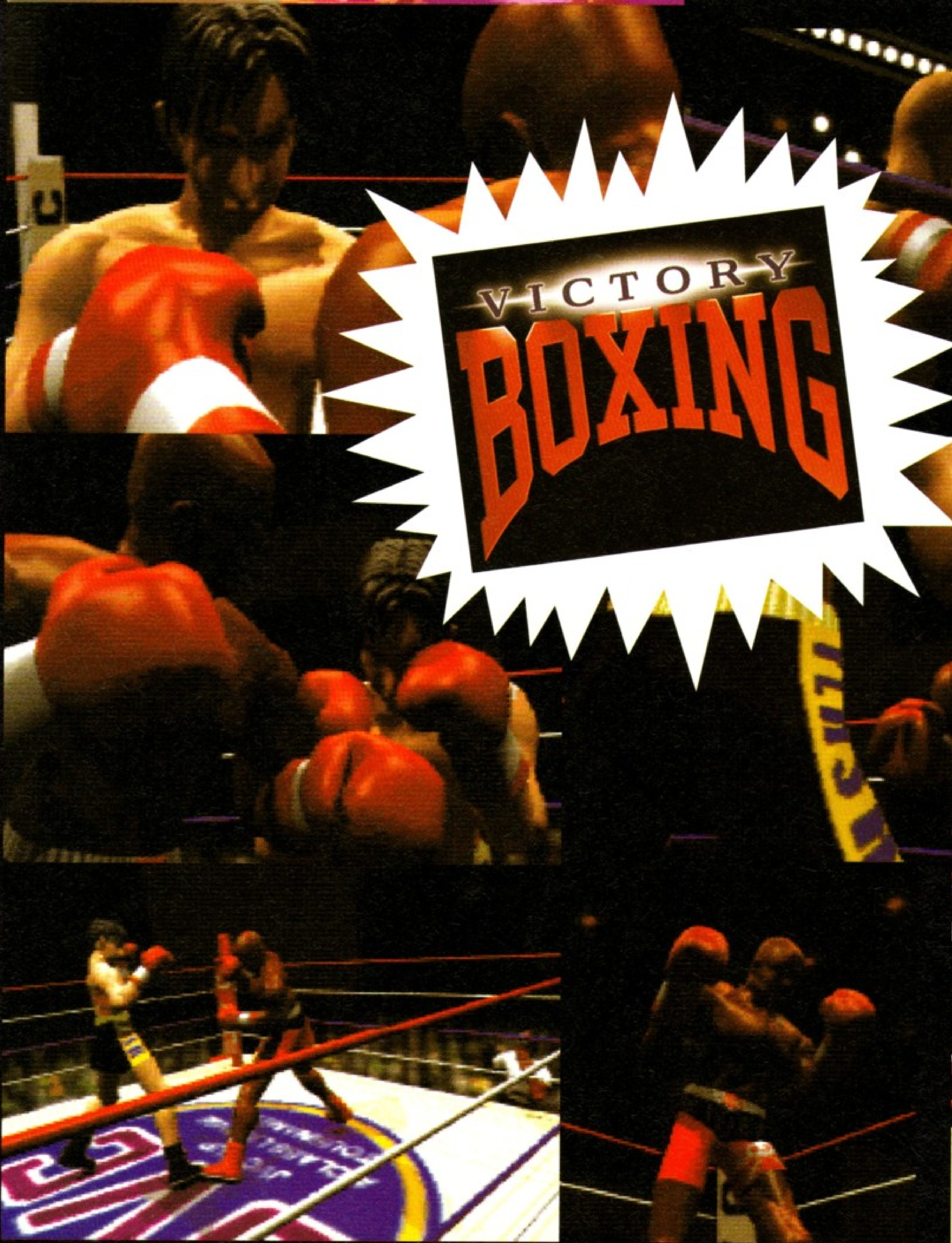
















There's really not much we can say about this pic. Except "nice haircut".



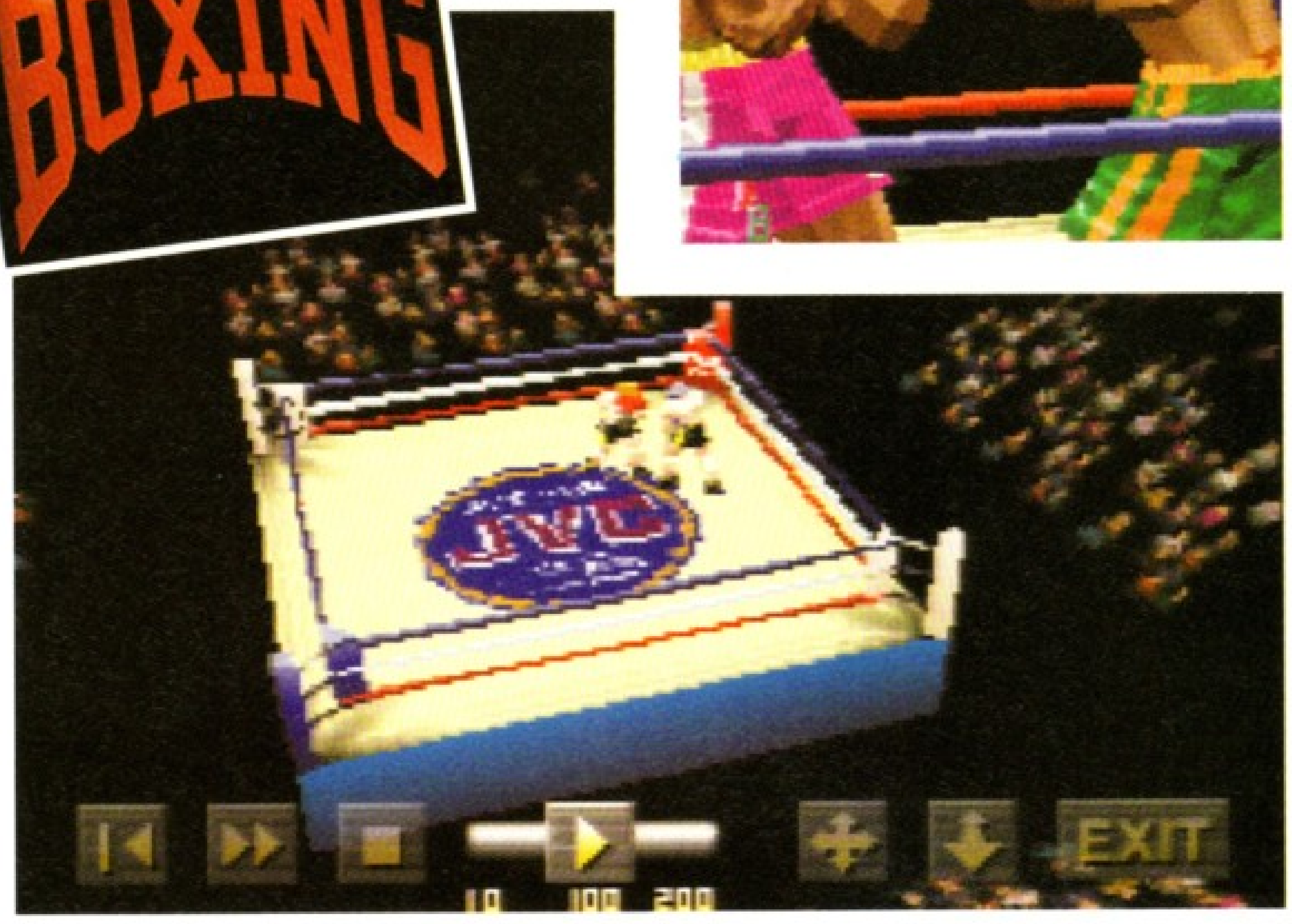


BAD TO THE BONE

Upon first loading the game you might be slightly shocked and disappointed by the sparse quantity of pre-generated boxers on offer (two) and the fact they don't have proper names or lists of hobbies or secret origins like other beat 'em up games. Well quit whining, because the point with Victory Boxing is that you create your very own boxer, and nurture their career with loving care. The actual mechanics of running up your combatant are detailed elsewhere in the this Showcase, so here we'll deal with how you actually beat people up.

It's not the standard gamut of left/right/left/block 2D action you might be used to. Indeed, the moves on offer to your boxer depends on what fighting style they use (which in turn depends upon their height and weight). Choose from straight jabs, hooks, uppercuts, long swings, body shots of as many varieties and a gamut of special moves (which we talk about somewhere else). Defence is equally varied, with low and high blocks, body swerves and side steps to keep you out of trouble. The idea is, obviously, to combine your skills for victory. But the height and reach of your character affect how your boxer works too, giving you a minimum and maximum effective fighting distance. Plus there are your three stat pipes to consider. These are tubes containing viscous blue stat power liquid. Each of the three stats (power, speed and stamina) is equally important in different ways, affecting how fast and hard you can hit and move and how many hits you can suffer before hitting the deck. It's possible to up the ante on these mothers, but it takes hard work and lots of fights.

The object of the game isn't just to take Joe Anonymous to the top of the table, it's to hone your own geezer to a point where they're not just world champ but are also easily capable of storing themselves on your memory cart and pasting all your friends too – although the main one-player prize should be first on your agenda. However, it's a lot harder than it looks. You have to think tactically, stick and move etcetera, as all the computer opponents have their own way of fighting which you have to suss individually. Plus they hit harder and make fewer mistakes than Johnny Human. Put simply, there's a lot more to Victory Boxing than wading in and waiting for the right time to use your mega-uppercut (which is what these games are usually about). You've got to think on your feet, take advantage of the twelve player-selectable camera angles to know what's going on, keep your punch power high *and* wait for the right time to use your mega-uppercut.



An example of the Replay options extensive camera positioning control. Choose any angle you like from just about whatever distance or elevation you like.







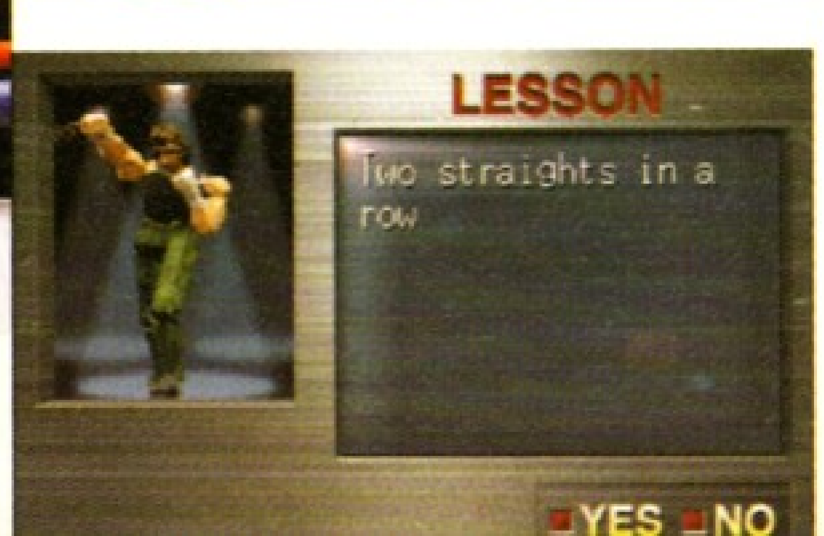


These newspapers tell the result of the match with a real-life picture of the bout.





Jeffry McWild steps into the ring against a pudding-bowl haired "baggy" from late 80s Manchester. Not really, it's just another Victory Boxing shot. But don't those fighters look big and excellent?







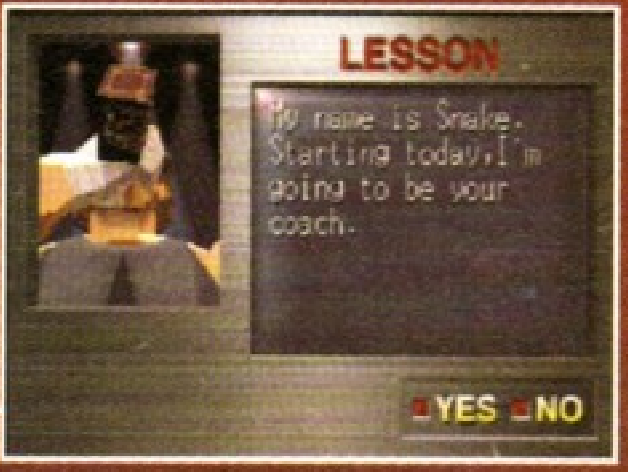


This rather splendid montage shows just how many possible viewpoints you can select in Victory Boxing. Except it doesn't. It only shows HALF of them! There are in fact twelve player selectable camera angles for in-fight viewing. Only a few of them are really useful, but the boxer's-eye view is good for a laugh and the under-the-canvas view looks like a Pet Shop Boys video.

goddamn, I know I can do it

So the point of the game is to create your own boxer is it? So how do you do that then? Well, it's dead dead easy. First off, pick a division for your boxer. This dictates their minimum and maximum height and weight and the bulk of their frame. Now select a gender from the three on offer – male, female and partly hermaphrodite (actually we're lying about the last one). Now pick one of the eleven handsome visages on offer, select your favourite height and body mass (within the allowable parameters) and what kind of shorts you want to wear. All that remains is picking a favoured handedness for you silky skills and it's on to the stats. You start the game with only a small amount of blue stat juice in your stat pipes. It's up to you how you distribute it by raising or lowering the amounts in each tube on screen (raising one automatically lowers the others and vice versa). Now give 'em a snappy name like Galaculus or John Anderton and you're ready for combat.



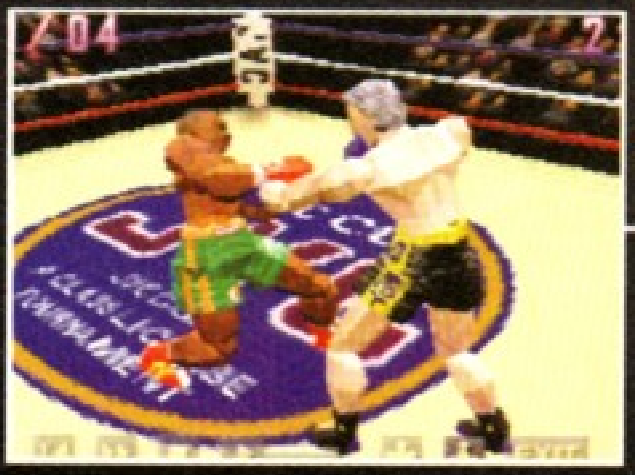


your father left you these gloves

As you rise up through the ranks of the boxing fellowship you're given the opportunity to learn special combos. You'll know when this happens because an eyepatch-adorned alcoholic called Snake appears and tells you, in his grizzly brogue, how to perform the new manoeuvre. Prior to instruction your boxer is unable to pull off these extra moves, so even if you know the right button combination you're scuppered with a less experienced fighter. The first couple of basic one-two hits are generic, but as the moves get more complex the combos vary to take advantage of the separate boxing styles on offer. Everything from a four hit jab-straight-uppercut-hook scene to a mega-swing to the chops is on offer. And then loads more.







right here's where you start paying... in sweat!

You might notice that an early-days pugilist is a bit of a weakling compared to those brawlers in higher positions. Well don't you worry your pretty little heads about it, because Charles Atlas is on hand to make you a MAN. And Charlene Atlas is only too happy to make any girl fighters MEN too, just to show we're not sexist. Anyway, there are two ways to improve your stats. The first is the old chestnut of training, which you're only allowed to do before a tournament fight. The three disciplines (punchball, girly skipping and sandbag) increase your speed, endurance and power statii respectively, and it's up to you to balance how much time to spend on each. However, the fuller a status pipe the lower the impact a training session offer. The other way to hone your gaming skills is to spar with a computer opponent. Sparring is pretty much like real fighting, except you can choose whether a boxer is better or worse than you, and combat doesn't affect your championship wins/losses or ranking. Hooray. Although you can't train in between sparring bouts. Boo.

oofay, me chin!

The crucial engine which drives the smackery lies within the spring-coiled clutches of the three Damage Meters. These are Defence, Power and Overall, in order of appearance. Defence slides down as you take more hits, and creeps up as you avoid or block shots. Power dictates how hard you're hitting, and the more punches you throw that don't connect the lower this bar. Overall judges the whole shebang physical status of your boxer. If defence hits rock bottom you're knocked to the ground, but can stand by pressing B. If Overall gets too low you're knocked out forever and doomed. But just to make things difficult and stop you from legging it around the ring waiting to recover each big hit you take lowers the maximum capacity of your Damage Meters. So you can float like a butterfly all you like but it's not going to get you anywhere.

let's see that again!

Like most 3D beat 'em ups these days Victory Boxing allows players to opportunity to relive glorious victories or – hey – just see where it all went wrong thanks to its replay mode. This presents itself at the end of each round, along with the punches thrown/landed and points stats. The controls offer a wide range of interesting functions which allow you to fast forward or rewind the action as desired (right to the start or end of the round), change the camera angle and swing with your joypad, view the fighting at your choice of speed (set with a sliding switch) or zoom in or out as desired. Very good for humiliating your friends with, we'll have to admit.

VICTORY BOXING IS REVIEWED ON PAGE 78



Full

ARTWORK © SEGA™ JAPAN

We were hoping to bring you a full-on Review and Showcase of Sega Rally Championship this month. But we haven't. Now you might be thinking "That's just because they're lazy slackers who can't be bothered putting their joypads down to give me the information I demand on exciting Saturn products" – and you'd be half right. We *are* lazy slackers, all these things and more, but that isn't why there's no Sega Rally Showcase. It's because the game has "slipped" down the release schedule by a month because Sega are lazy slackers too. But just to make up for the lack of total product testing in this issue we're delighted to present our amazing Special Update showing still more of the amazing new features found in the 100% complete version. It looks good, it tastes good, and by golly it does you good.

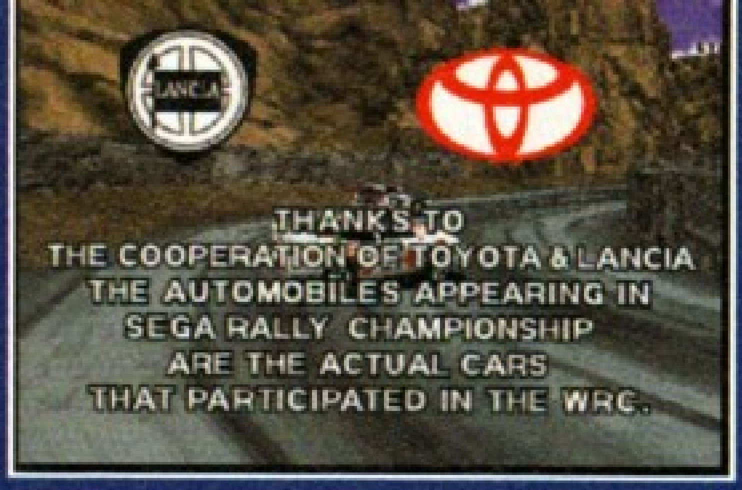




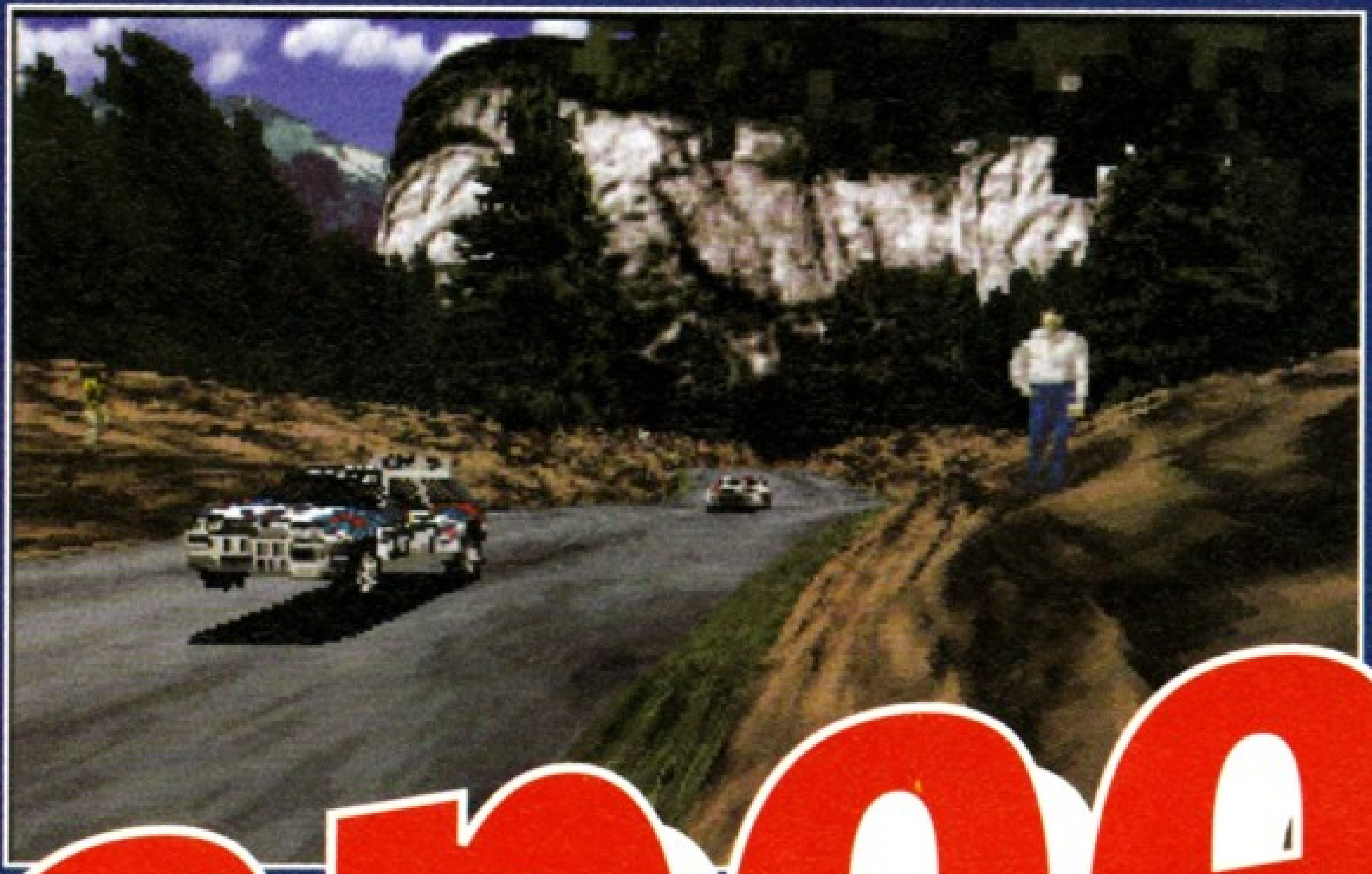
One of the most exciting Saturn Rally developments is the all-new Lakeside course. It's a super-advanced course for top players, and it's hidden away evilly. Accessing Lakeside is easy enough in theory, but harder in practice. All you have to do is win all three regular races in first place. All – ha ha, *all*, he says in full knowledge of the difficulty of the task. Anyway should you manage that little feat the Lakeside course is yours to keep. And if you can top *that* in first place there's an extra-special extra-ace top secret surprise which we'll reveal in our amazing Showcase. Until then you'll just have to wonder and salivate.

If ghost cars aren't your cup of bag but you're still interested in seeing how the fastest lap or race was achieved you're in luck. Rally automatically saves the fastest lap or three (for Time Attack mode) for your viewing pleasure. Just select the option and sit back, making little comments on the performance of the driver and banging on about how much better you could do, and that you'd never clip your tyres on that corner there, oh no.





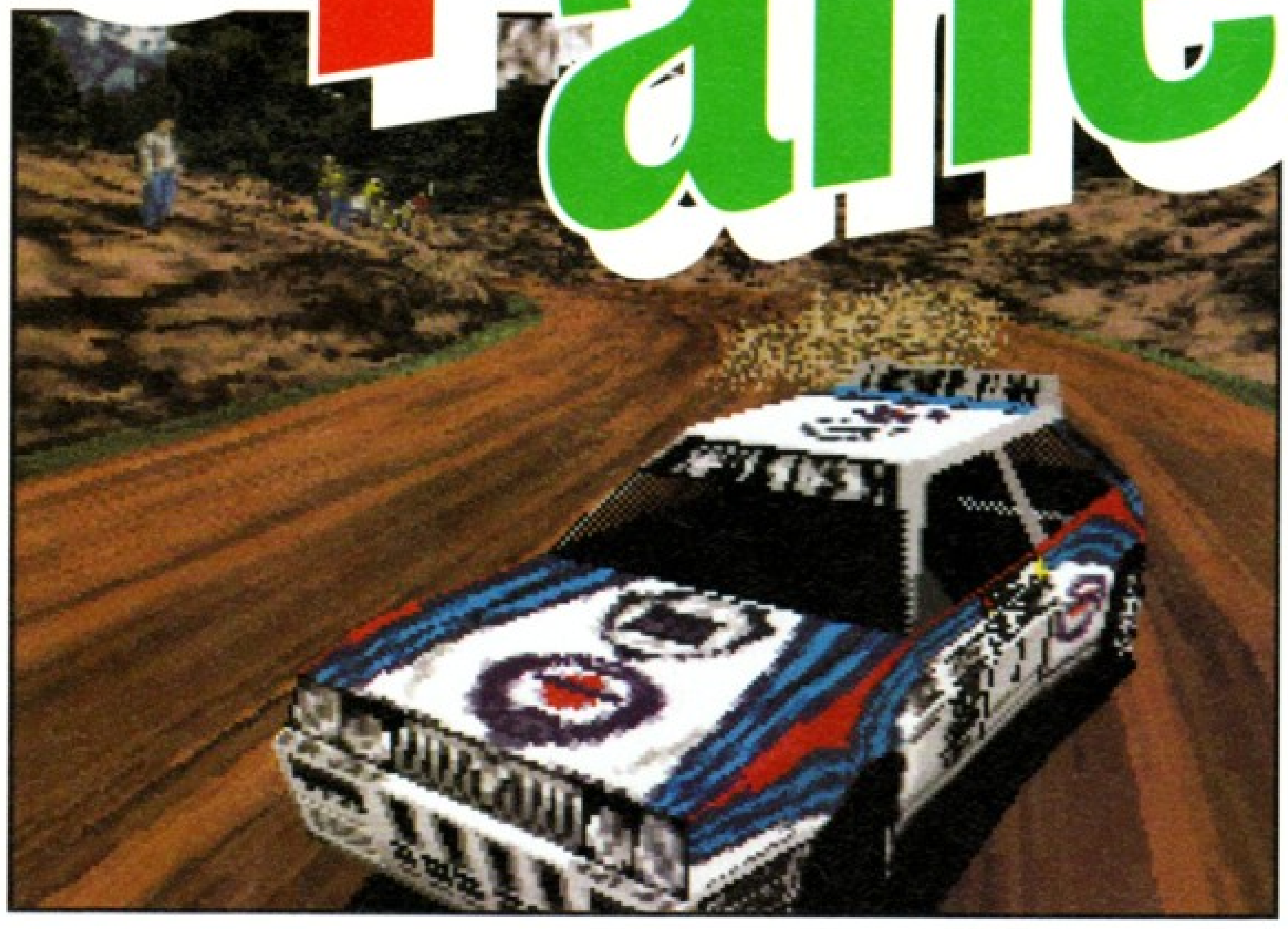






speed ahead!

My God! Look at those graphics! TAKE A GOOD FLAMING LOOK AT THOSE GRAPHICS, YOU HEATHENS. Not bad eh? This is all done on the Saturn you know. And they haven't even begun to learn to program it properly yet.







(LEFT) This attractive screenshot displays the Rally Replay mode to admirable effect. As you can see, the whole front of the car is as beautifully drawn as the oft-seen rear, and e'en the mud slews caused by the back wheels are cherished in memory. If only all games could be this finely crafted. I'd be out of a job though, as a reviewer.

ghost car

Wooo! That's our impression of a ghost. Not overly convincing, perhaps, but the best we can do in the circumstances. Anyway, there is a point to all this horse-play, and that is to illustrate the addition of the new Time Attack ghost car. This spectral jalopy replicates the fastest lap (or race with a three-lap Time Attack), racing ahead or behind of you depending on your performance. This not only looks totally cool but also aids your racing strategy. More on this in next month's Showcase.

2-player

The fine-ass split-screen two-player mode is now firmly entrenched in the Rally Code. And we've seen it. And now you can too, by looking at the screenshots on this page. The very presence of this mode was quite a surprise for most people when first announced, but even cold-hearted cynics should be amazed by the wealth of options which accompanies the two-player challenge. There's plenty of scope for handicapping, so you can show off your skills to all your friends (and watch them go home). If head starts or time lags aren't your bag, try the Boost option, which ups the top speed of the losing car, thus increasing the pace of the race. And there are all sorts of other things too which we'll tell you all about next month.







Saturn Tips

Games. They're great. Unless you're stuck on one. Then you end up slapping your mum when she calls you down for tea. Well we want to stop that with our Tips. You can too by sending your Tips in to TIPS, SEGA SATURN MAG, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

BUG!

To get a level skip mode, go to the title screen with "Start" and "Options" on it and press B, A, B, Y, Down, Right, A, L button, Down. If you take the first letter of each direction and take the directions as North, South, East and West it spells 'BABY SEALS'. You'll hear Bug make a "Yipe!" noise to let you know it's worked. Start the game as usual then hold the L button and press Up to skip up a level or hold the L button and press Down to skip back a level. When going through the stages you'll notice that you can also play on the dragonfly bonus levels. Thanks to Kemal Tossoun from Chelsea for giving us that cheat.





ROBOTICA

To do these cheats you have to press the button listed on controller 2 whilst holding both the L and R buttons on controller 1.



- Skip to next level - Press Start on controller 2.
- Refill generator - Press B on controller 2.
- Recharge shields - Press A on controller 2.
- Power up weapon - Press X on controller 2.
- Refill ammo - Press Y on controller 2.

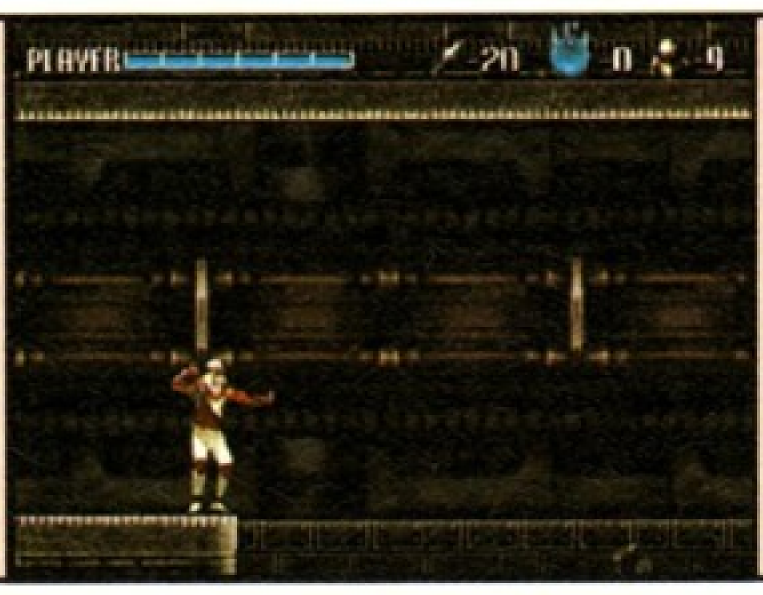
INTERNATIONAL VICTORY GOAL

This game's not as bad as everyone says, at least not now you know how to move the flags around before a game! Choose your teams for a match and when the two flags appear, hold the L or R button and hold different directions on the pad to make the flags move.



SHINOBI-X

To warp Joe to any of the game's levels, pause and press A, B, A, B, C. The stage number will appear in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen. Press Left or Right to select any level up to 9-1, then press Start.





THEME PARK

To get Bullfrog's very own park with loads of good rides and things in it, enter your nickname as 'DEAD' and click on 'end'. On the next screen press A and Z together. That's all there is to it.



CLOCKWORK *KNIGHT* 2

Here are some brilliant cheats.









To get a level select, go to the title screen with the horse on it and press Right, Up, Left, Up, Right, Up, Down, Up, Left, Up, Left, Up. The level name will appear. Now press Up or down to select a room and press X to cycle through the separate stages.

To get 999 lives, go to the title screen and press Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Down. Start as usual and you'll have all the lives.

To see the game's end sequence, go to the title screen and press Right, Up, Left, Up, Down, Up, Right, Left, Up, Right, Left, Down. Start the game as usual to start it up.

ASTAL



To refill your energy at any time, pause the game and press Down, R button, Up, L button, X, A, Y, B, Z, C, Right, Left.

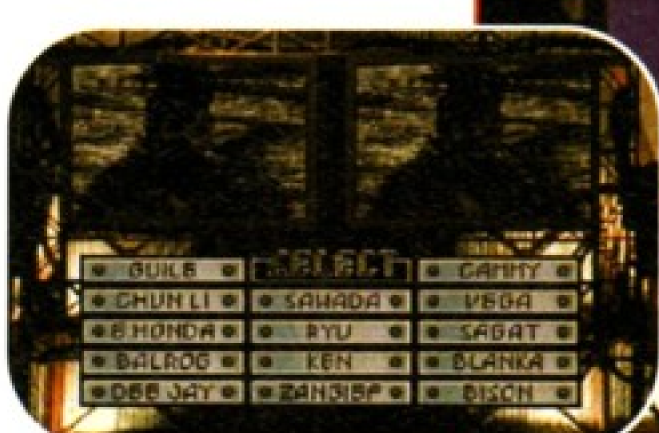
To make yourself invincible for the current level, pause the game and press Up, Y, Left, A, Down, B, Right, C.

To die, pause the game and press L button, A, R button, C, B. It's useful, honest.

The stage select cheat can only be used when you're playing in the Secret Mode. To enter Secret Mode, go to the options screen and press Left, Right, Left, Right, Up, Down, L button, R button, Start on the second controller. "Secret Mode" will appear at the top of the screen. You can now get the stage select working by going to the title screen with "Game Start" and "Options" and pressing Up, Down, Left, Right, L button, R button, A, Y, C, Z, B, X. "Stage Select" will appear under "Options".

STREETFIGHTER: *THE MOVIE*

To fight against the secret boss, Akuma, fight through the game up to Bison without losing a round and Akuma should be there for the fighting. We've also heard that while fighting against him, if you press Start on controller 2 you can fight as him. There's a simpler cheat to play as Akuma in the game as well. When on the Street Battle character select screen press Up, B, Down, Z, Right, X, Left, Y and Akuma's black outline should appear in the place of your character, meaning that you've highlighted him. Now press C to select him. As we're lovely, here are all of his moves as well.





FIREBALL



Roll the pad from Down to Forwards and press any punch.

BURNING FIREBALL



Roll the pad from Back to Forwards and press any punch.

DRAGON PUNCH



Press Forwards, Down, Down/Forwards and press any punch.

HURRICANE KICK



Roll the pad from Down to Back and press any kick.

TELEPORT



Press Forwards, Down, Down/Forwards and any two punches.

MID-AIR FIREBALL



Roll the pad from Down to Forwards and press any punch when jumping.

The following moves can only be done when your Super Power bar is full.

SUPER FIREBALL - Roll the pad from Down to Forwards and press all three punches.

SUPER HURRICANE KICK - Roll the pad from Down to Back and press all three kicks.

SUPER COMBO FIREBALL - Roll the pad from Down to Forwards then Down to Forwards and press punch.

SEGA SATURN

Review *Index*

They're here! Yep after literally years of anticipation and information translated from Japanese magazines, AM2's Virtua Cop and Virtua Fighter 2 have both arrived in the same month! Can you believe it? Well, we're not going to complain, because, within a few short weeks, they'll both be available in the shops and ready for use on your very own machine! And, just to make sure you don't miss out when Cop is released, we suggest you order a copy now. The release date is DECEMBER 8TH. That's DECEMBER 8TH. There's no definite date for Fighters 2 yet, but with any luck it should be a couple of weeks after.

Anyway, that's the big stuff for this issue. There's more games too, including the excellent Firestorm and Victory Boxing, and, er, a load of other titles too.

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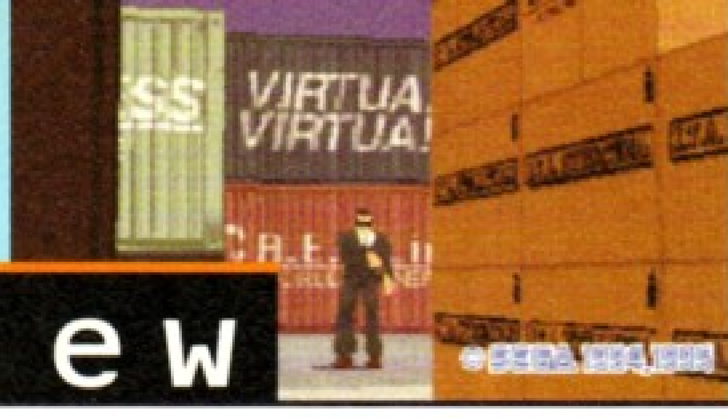
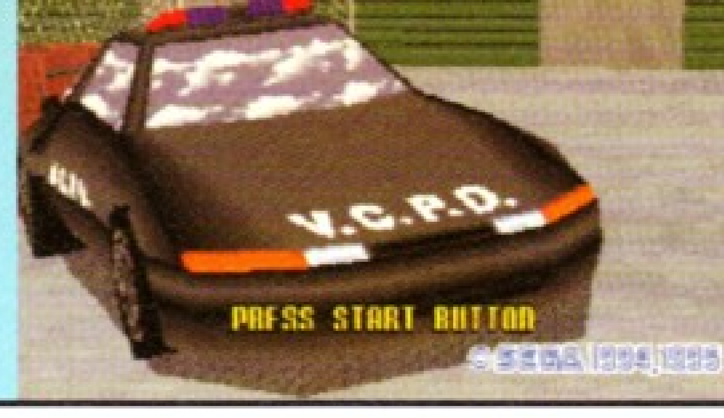


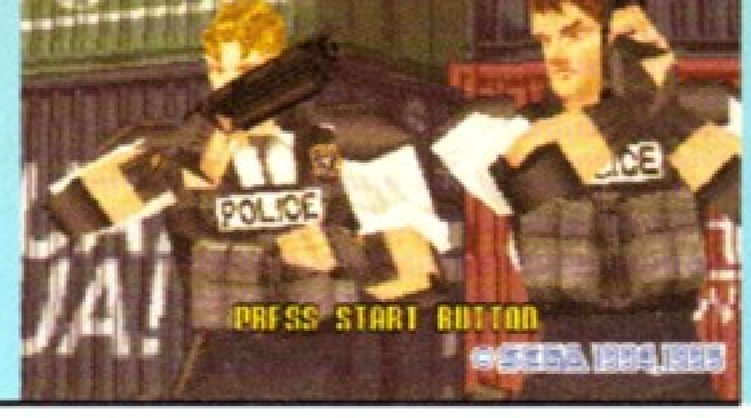




REVIEW UPDATE!

Cyber Speedway costs £39.99, not £49.99 as stated in our review. Sorry 'bout that!



BY	SEGA
PRICE	£59.99
STYLE	KILLING
RELEASE	DECEMBER

Another amazing AM2 title, this one a glorification of all things evil and violent. But does Virtua Cop have enough stamina to last a home invasion?

Arcade gun games were dead before the appearance of Virtua Cop. In fact they're still dead with the exception of Virtua Cop. Who's bothered about spending a quid to fire a big plastic swivel-mount machine gun at some badly-digitised actors or unconvincing alien sprites? Let's face it, the novelty value wore off long ago, and only the incredible innovations of Cop could tempt most regular arcade-goers to pick up a gun again.

But tempt it did. The reasons for Cops success are manifold. The area-sensitive polygon graphics allowed players to shoot to kill or wound as desired, with different results for different hits (arm grasping, collapsing to the floor with a dodgy leg, spinning around dead). The game isn't nearly so static as other titles of this kind either – your cops explore the terrain of each level fully, running around and progressing through the landscapes of each level as it blows up and collapses around them. And you don't see thousands of enemies popping up from behind exactly the same barrel, either, as the amount of cover provided is taken into account when placing sheltered hostile forces. In fact, you won't see enemies popping up from behind barrels at all that much, as your foes arrive on screen in far more interesting ways – running out from buildings, rolling across the floor, sliding down conveyor belts, leaping out of trucks, you name it – if it's Starsky and Hutch-style it's in there.





Of course, the gameplay challenge is pretty linear. It's a target-shooting game, which tests your aim and your reflexes, as well as your target-assessment techniques and general capacity for mass slaughter (although only of villains, don't shoot the hostages, remember). Shooting your enemies more than once and watching them twitch and convulse as your polygon slugs slam into their criminal bodies is enormously satisfying, but sometimes you have to forego such bloodthirsty pleasure to take out another target. But there are lots of little touches which add depth to the mayhem. Shoot a barrel of fuel and the resulting explosion takes out all nearby nasties, along with any surrounding scenery or vehicles. Blasting a perp in the right location disarms them, awarding bonus points and making you look cool in front of your mates. Basically it's one of the most stress-sating shoot 'em ups you'll ever play.

Of course it's best if you shell out the dough for two guns. The actual hardware is well-balanced and feels exactly like an arcade shooter. But if you're not that bothered about realism you'll not be disappointed by the joypad controls. The two cursor movement speeds allow you to shift your sight across the screen in plenty of time and also aim perfectly, plus reloading is made just enough of a faff to emulate the off-screen reloading procedure of the pistols. But it's unlikely any real fan of the arcade will deny themselves the full-on experience.

Putting it simply, Virtua Cop is up there with the best of the 32-BIT games. It's got more depth than you'd imagine but is still mindless enough to prove frenetically playable. Even once you've completed it (and perfected the additional Training Mode option) you'll still want to go back. Not necessarily to beat your high score, just for the sheer fun of it. Sega have once again shown that their formidable arcade division is the perfect breeding ground for classic home games. Buy ten copies.

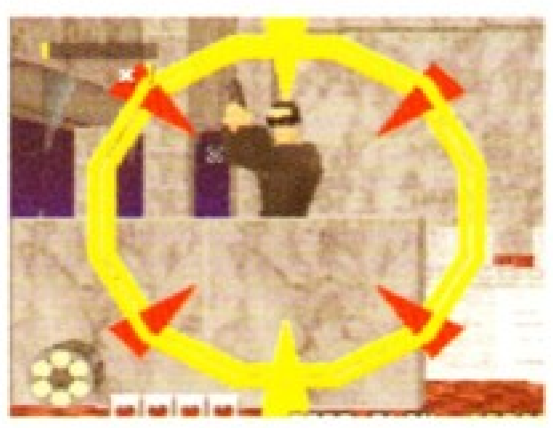
RAD



This is King, the level two boss. He's really difficult to defeat, mainly because he has loads of other baddies helping him out. Best defeated in two-player mode.



Just like the arcade, there's three stages in the Saturn version of Virtua Cop, and there's the Saturn-only original mode too, which two players can enjoy.

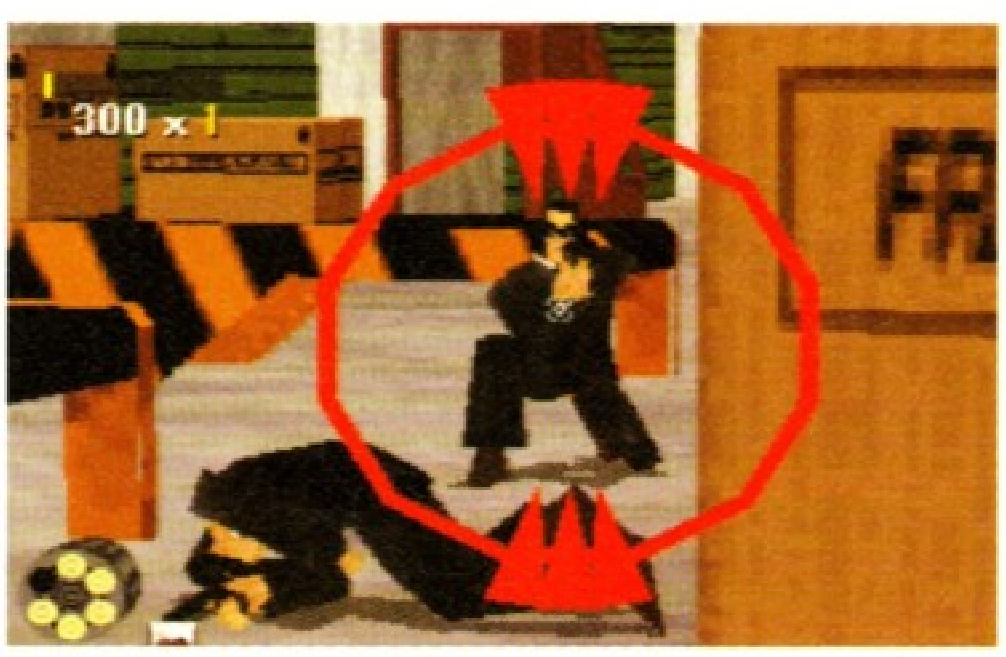








This truck comes bursting through in level one, and the baddies take pot shots at you as they drive past.



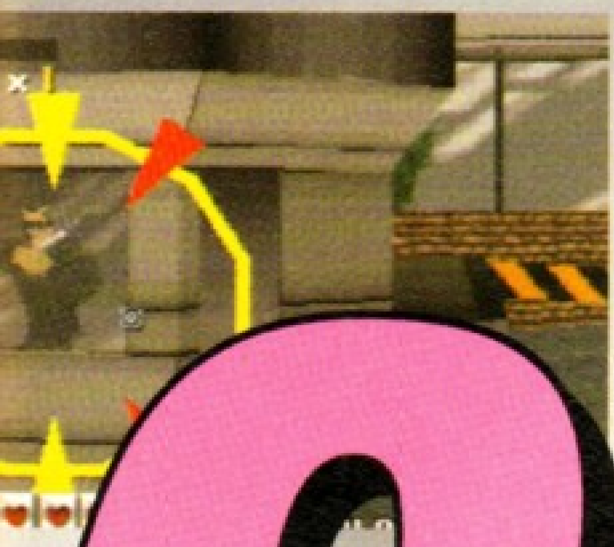
Depending on where you hit the enemy, you'll be awarded different points. Shoot them in the head for the highest count.











Virtua Cop



Virtua Cop – the best game yet on the Saturn? Could well be, although you'll need two guns to get the most out of it.









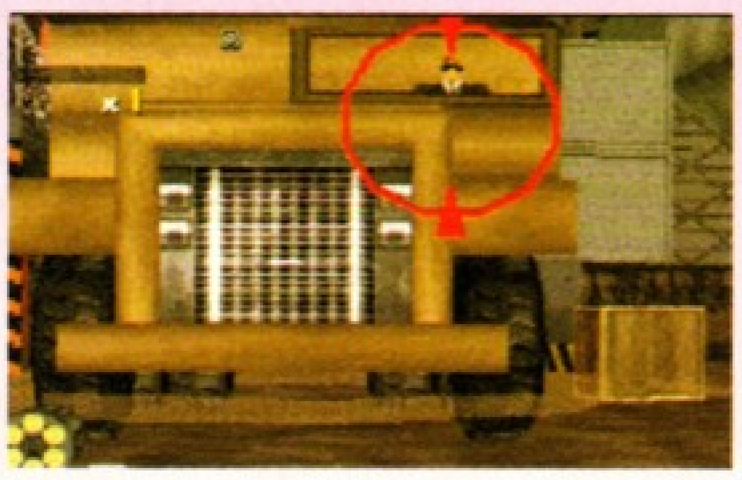
The game ends when all your Life Markers are gone.





What can we say? This is arcade perfect (as far as we can tell) and it's damned bloody enjoyable too. Even if you do finish it (which is quite likely), you'll still want to play it again, and again, and again...

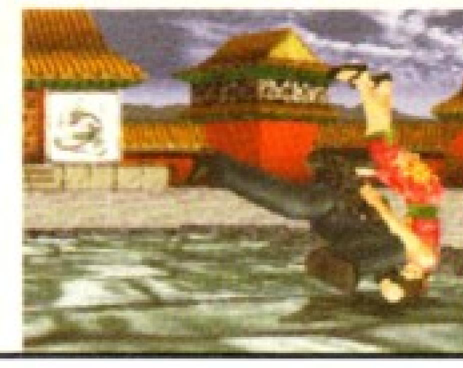




graphics	95
sound	91
playability	96
lastability	94

overall **96%**







BY	SEGA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	BEAT 'EM UP
RELEASE	JANUARY

Virtua Fighter is widely acclaimed as one of the most incredible fighting games ever, revolutionising the genre with stunning polygon graphics and 3D movement. The sequel's here and as expected, new superlatives are needed to sum up its qualities. Can we find them? Read on...



Lau and Akira get down to business in this awesome conversion of Virtua Fighter 2.

Virtua Fighter 1 was an awesome game - let there be no doubt. Many were the nights we'd all stay late after work indulging in the old "winner stays on" scenario, which inevitably drew howls of frustration, sadness, woe and genuine agony from poor old Tom Guise. Oh yes, VF was an awesome game, although was some doubt about the Saturn's capabilities. If the machine had trouble coping with VF, how would it cope with the far more advanced sequel?









Now the game is here and the answer to the aforementioned question is "Really rather well, considering" and indeed howls of defeat and anguish once again resound through the office after hours. VF2 is technically superior to anything ever seen on a home machine in terms of 3D. You want super-smooth 60 frames a second action (well, 50 on the PAL version)? You got it. You want no glitching and fully texture-mapped fighters? No problem. And every move and every character converted onto Saturn? To use the vernacular: sorted, mate.

Virtua Fighter 2 is so advanced, comparing it to its predecessor is like contrasting the performance of a Ferrari F40 to a Reliant Robin (without any wheels). In its super high-resolution glory, Virtua Fighter 2 does an uncanny impression of the 20-times-more-expensive Model Two arcade machine - even improving on it in one or two regards. And no, there is nothing remotely close to this on any other system.

Features which would seem inappropriate to the arcades are perfectly at home in the, er, home. Case in point: the Team Battle Mode, which enables you to choose five fighters and square them off against an opponent's grouping. For a more detailed listing, examine the Showcase. Suffice it to say that the game does everything possible to draw you in and keep you at the machine.

The "reality" that made Virtua Fighter 1 such an enormous hit is also far more advanced in the sequel. In the first game you punched an opponent and he either dropped back a bit or fell over. The sequel is far more sophisticated, with a range of different falls, temporary stuns and various staggering motions. This time, when you trip an opponent over, it looks like a trip.

Coupling this level of realism with the unparalleled graphics makes Virtua Fighter 2 by far and away the most compelling combat game ever seen.

The range of moves is also second to none. Every character benefits from over twice as many different techniques as was seen in the first game. Just about all of the original moves return, making the game instantly accessible to any one who's played the original (although there's much, much more still to learn). The ability to shake yourself loose from cheap, cheesy throws (but not the difficult to perform techniques) is also a welcome - and cleverly implemented - addition.



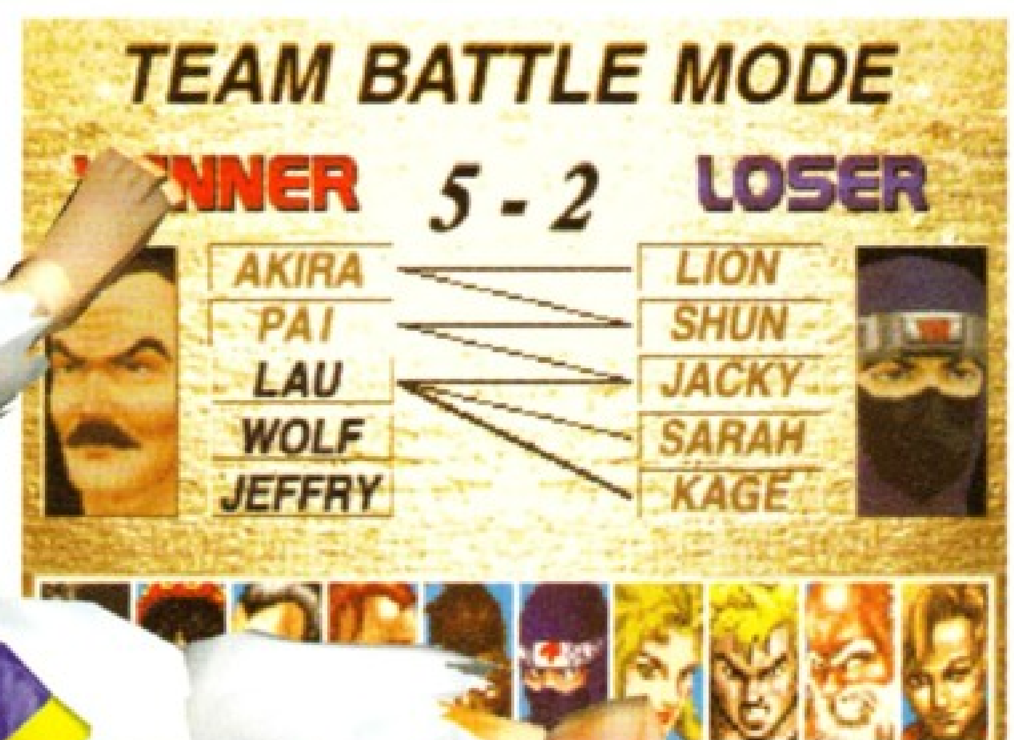




I could spend pages and pages going on about everything that I like about VF2 (I still haven't mentioned the choice of excellent music or the superb victory taunts of each fighter), but the fact remains that this is an incredible game on every level, redefining my expectations of what a next generation product should be. You could take so many features away from the game and it would still be an absolutely fantastic release.

You don't know how close I came to giving this game 99%...

RICHARD LEADBETTER













Virtua Fighter 2

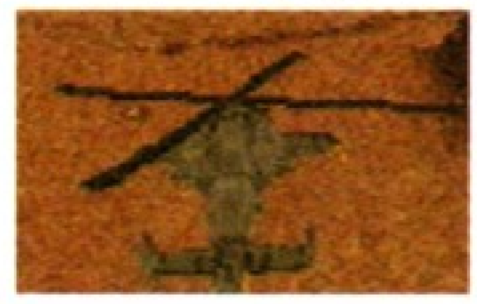
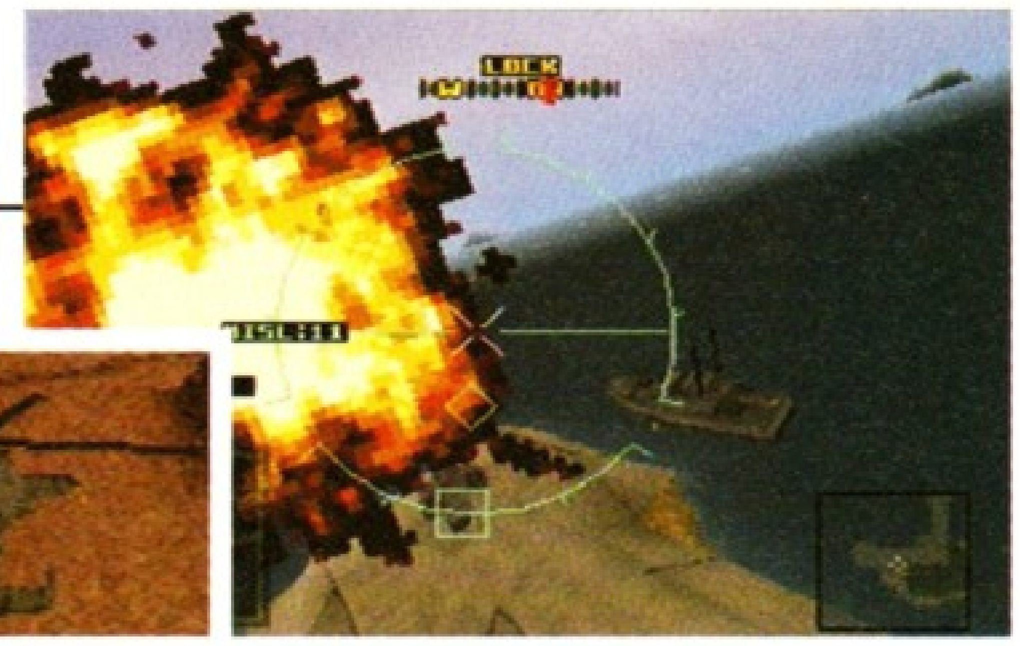
The characters in Virtua Fighter 2 are much improved over the original title – they are both more detailed and more fluid. In fact this whole game is just far too slick for its own good – the best conversion we've seen this year, with NO exception.

The best audio-visuals ever seen on any home machine, coupled with the most in-depth beat 'em up gameplay witnessed on any combat game - Virtua Fighter 2 is quite frankly too good to be true.

graphics	98
sound	94
playability	98
lastability	97

overall **98%**

BY	CORE DEIGN
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	DECEMBER

Gor blimey, it's the old trouble and strafe. Thunderhawk flits onto the Saturn, destroying everything in its path.






Helicopters are the least-plundered real-life inspiration for games with the most obvious potential. They're very versatile in the air, they carry loads of weapon and they're used to shoot ace things like tanks and people. But sadly most games developers seem to spurn our old airborne friends in favour of space ships or special moves.

But if you're in helicopters you could hardly hope for a better helicopter title than Firestorm. Whilst the controls, in number and seeming complexity, might hint at a simulationy play style Firestorm is really a top notch shoot 'em up. It's based, missions-wise, on the classic Mega-CD prequel, but with more objectives, more enemies, bigger play areas and generally loads and loads of extras designed to make it pretty much unrecognisable. There's also a lot more depth in the chopper control, which makes firefighting a more flexible and enjoyable pastime. The Virtual Cockpit deserves a mention for being nice, especially thanks to the Virtual Neck, which means your pilot's head occasionally turns automatically to the side to track a Primary Target.

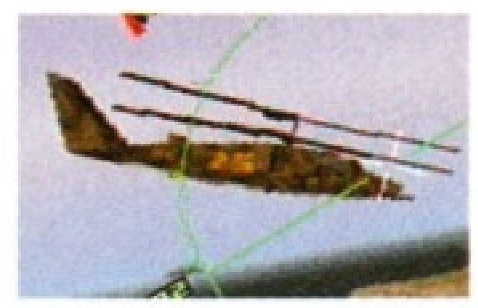



But possibly the real stars of Firestorm are the graphics. Not only are the enemies, backgrounds and buildings all exceptionally well drawn and realistic, they're also blessed with top notch texture mapping. Fly as close as you like to anything you fancy and take a good look at it – there's not a spot of pixellation to be seen. Even on the little men escaping from the wreckage of their vehicles.

Of course, great graphics (and sound, which is brilliant) can't totally replace gameplay, but in this case they certainly enhance it greatly. Whilst Firestorm possesses admirable strategic qualities, throwing a hundred objectives into the face of the player, the main focus of the game is on destroying. Destroying almost everything except friendly convoys. And the slick and adaptable controls of the helicopter, together with the huge guns, mean once you've familiarised yourself with the handling, ravaging the environment is a piece of cake.

If you're a fan of the original Thunderhawk there's not much doubt you'll enjoy this too. The visual splendour is most impressive (and far more colourful, obviously) and there's something satisfying about the considerable challenge set. With eight campaigns, each with numerous sub-operations and each sub-operation with multiple objectives there's plenty of action in store. The variety level is upped by night missions, water missions and just general mayhem missions. Well worth investigating, particularly for fans of mindless demolition.

RAD

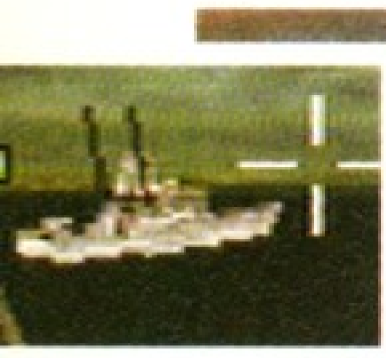




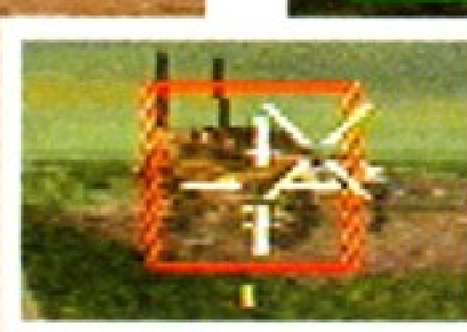
Another scene of mass destruction courtesy of that wacky Firestorm game from Core Design. It's lovely.

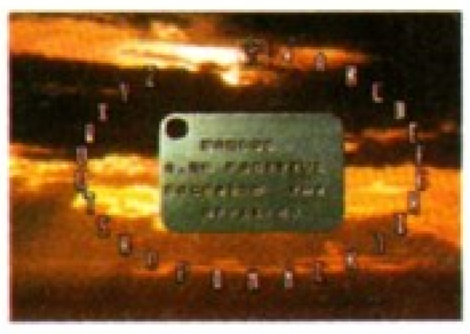











Firestorm: THUNDERHAWK 2



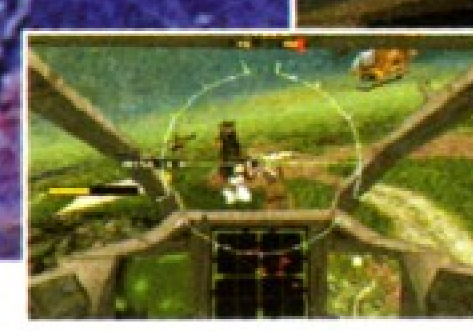
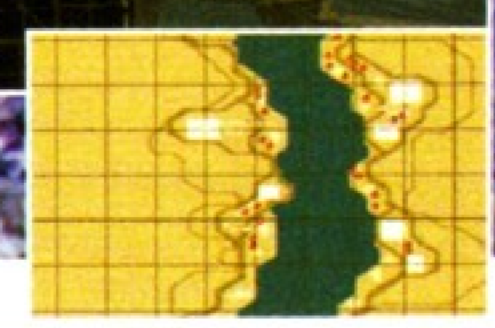




Enemy helicopters are probably the hardest things to shoot down in the game. But getting into rotor-blade dogfights with them is great fun. Use all your excellent helicopter movements and manoeuvres to outwit that dastardly CPU pilot and win the day. Again.

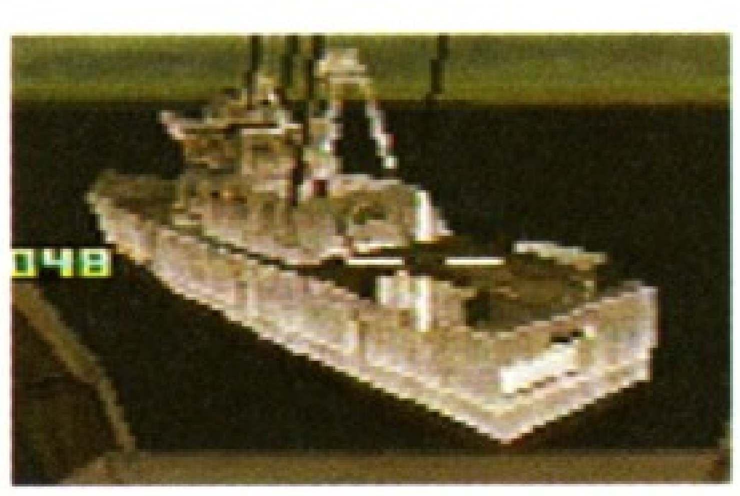




Look at all those wonderful fireworks. But remember — war is not big and not clever in real life. Don't start one.





A cracking title which hardcore death-mongers should fall in love with sweetly.

graphics	93
sound	92
playability	90
lastability	91

overall

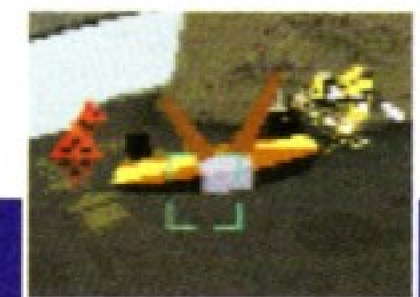
90%



BY	BULLFROG
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	RACING
RELEASE	DECEMBER/JAN

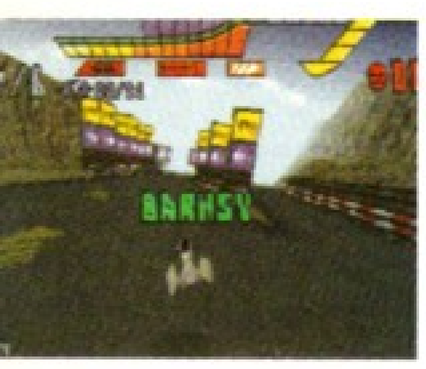
It wasn't very finished on the PC, but Hi Octane is now ready to hit the Saturn. Is there room on the shelves for another racer? How goo[d] are the bleepy techno soundtracks?






Hi Octane is a game which demonstrates, despite its quality, just how incredible the genius of AM2 really is. Make no mistake, Hi Octane is a brilliant title, from the same people who brought the stupendous award-winning Magic Carpet to the PC. But even they haven't matched the graphical finesse of Sega's flagship stable. Although, to be fair, Hi Octane has been produced without the aid of the AM2 SGL OS.

But enough of the punditry. Just what is this Hi Octane business and should you buy it? Well it's a futuristic race game in a similar vein to Wipeout on PlayStation. You, the player, pilot a floating car-thing. However, there's a large and varied choice of floating car thing. You could have an incredibly fast and light floating spiky car thing, or a slow but well-armoured box-like floating car thing. But why would you want to choose a slow vehicle in a racing game? Why because Hi Octane also contains plenty of scope for absolute mass destruction. Indeed, if the race league isn't to your taste there's a whole sub-game dedicated to simply blasting various computer (or human) foes into vapour. And as if that weren't enough there are enough two-player modes to fulfil all your wildest multi-player fantasies that don't involve more than eight people or sex. The first is an impressive split-screen game which doesn't show the expected sign of slowdown. The second is an evil chase game known as Hot Seat, which hands each player (up to a maximum of eight) only a limited amount of time in control of their vehicle. Then a countdown appears on-screen and the joypad is handed on to the next player. The idea is to frag or out-race all the other participants in the twenty seconds or so each turn at the controls allows you. Ace fun.





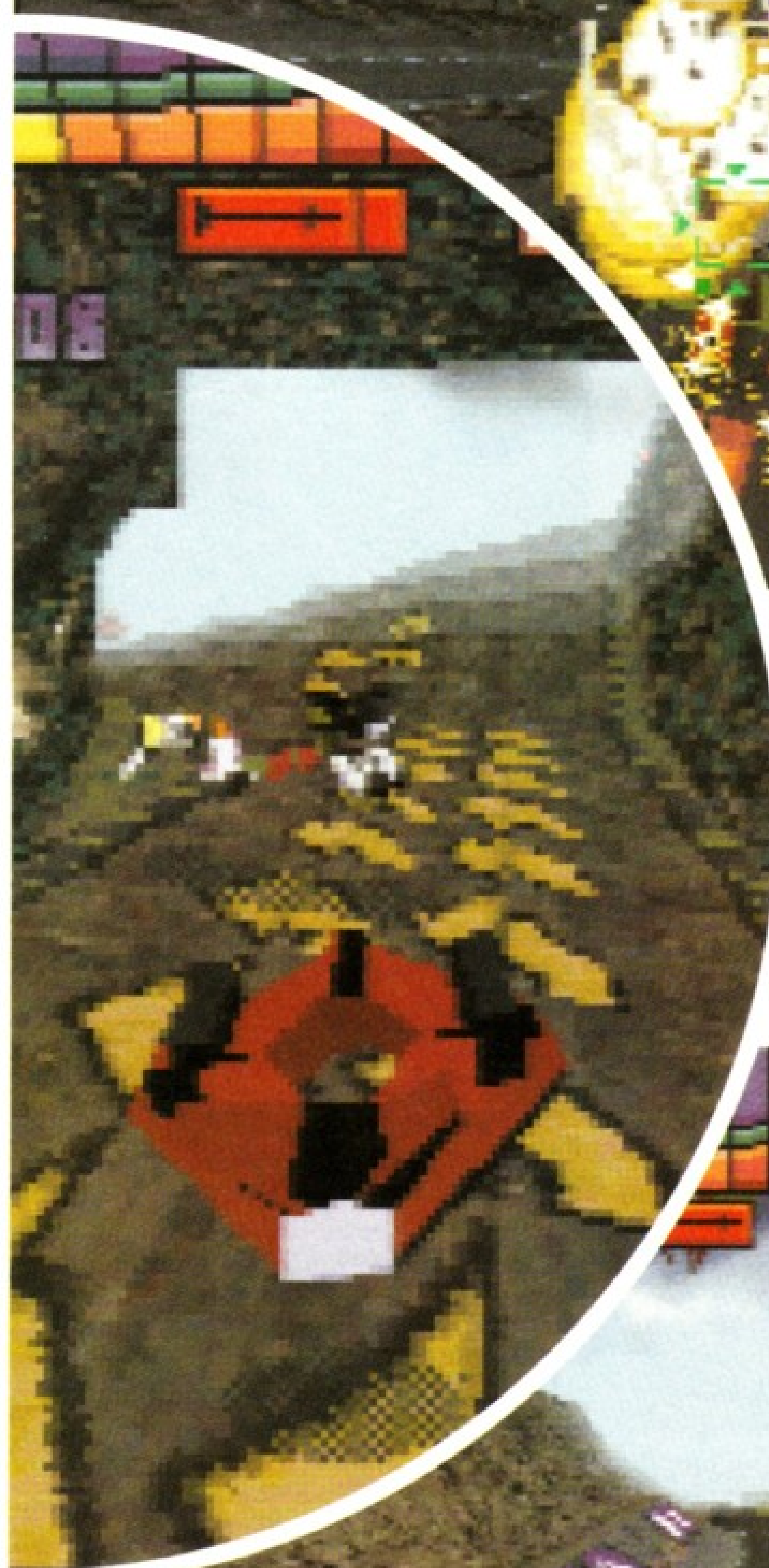
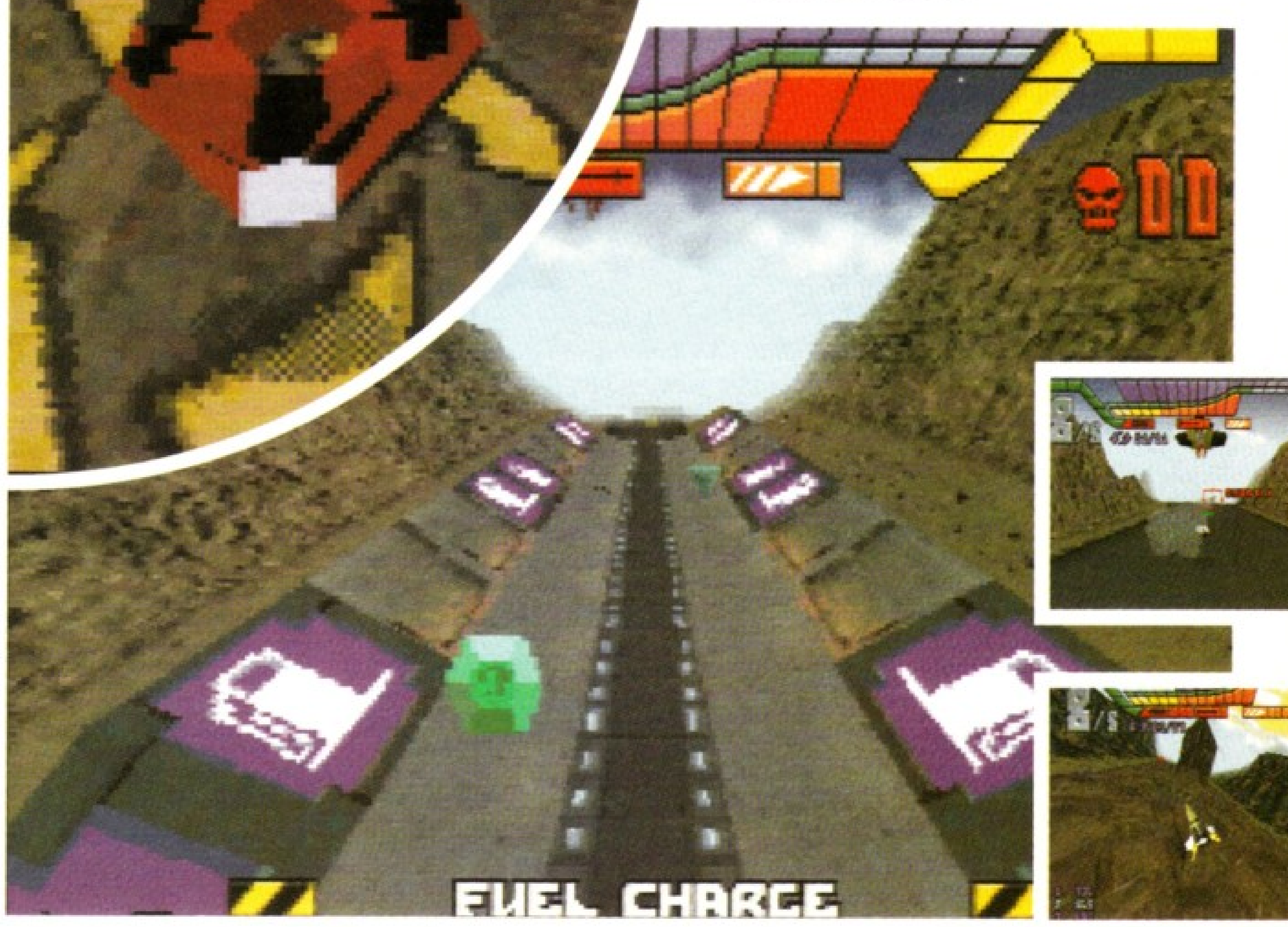


So you're familiar with the good ideas. Which don't stop there, thinking about it. There are weapon pick-up points, fuel levels to monitor, secret shortcuts, secret bonus sections hidden in destructible areas of scenery and all kind of other stuff we don't have the space to write about.

Right, so *now* you're familiar with the good ideas. Most of them. But what about the gameplay? Is it good? Or bad? Well, it's good. Each of the different floating car things handles in a unique fashion, so you have to play with one kind until you're used to the controls or you'll never negotiate the steepness of the learning curve. The good thing is that they do all behave like floating cars of some weight, sliding around nicely with back-end momentum, or sliding up (and back down) slopes on the track. The game speed, whilst perhaps not of turbo shag-head status, is quick enough to be exciting. And the graphics are most passable, with some excellent course graphics, but slightly less excellent cars (ie they're a bit boring). Anyway, the Saturn is now stuffed to the gills with brilliant race games. And whilst Hi Octane doesn't compare with the magic of Rally, it's worth having a pop at if you fancy a change from road-based chase fury.

RAD



Given that some vehicles have obvious speed advantages over others, there has to be a levelling factor to ensure all drivers are given a fair chance. That factor takes the form of your chain gun (and its unlimited ammunition) or missiles (far more powerful, but limited in their supply). If you chance upon one of your opponents, simply blow them to smithereens.









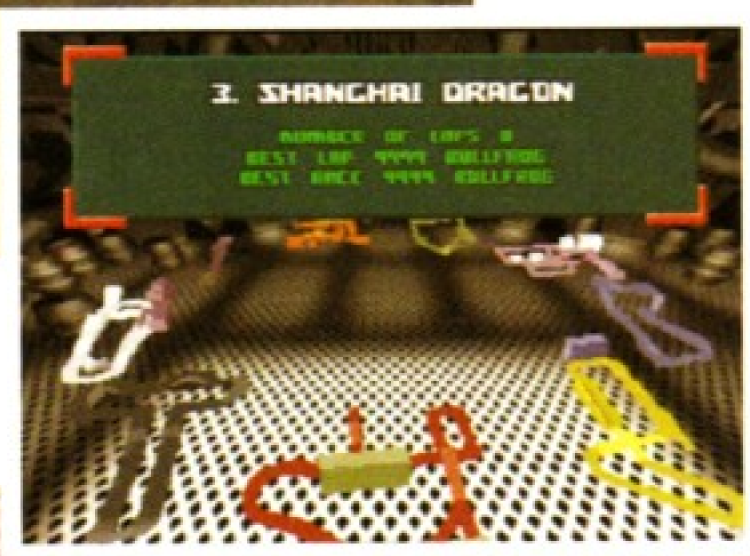
Hi Octane



You must destroy Steve Austin. You MUST DESTROY Steve Austin.













The horizon tilts lovingly as your motor twists and banks around the course. What a pleasant touch of realism. Sort of.







The motion of anti-gravity vehicles (or what they're probably like anyway) is nicely re-created in Hi Octane by an impressive undulating track environment. Don't let any old relatives who get car sick play it, or they might very well cause some expensive damage to your carpet.

Might not have the big-name license, but this is varied and enjoyable enough to warrant further investigation.

graphics	90
sound	91
playability	90
lastability	92

overall **90%**

BY	JVC
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	BOXING
RELEASE	DECEMBER

Many games have tried, but few have succeeded in translating the noble sport of thumping to the interactive screen. Can JVC buck the trend? Or what? Eh?



Boxing is great, and all calls for it to be banned must be silenced. Nothing beats the sheer pleasure derived from watching two big blokes beat the absolute crimminy out of each other. But wouldn't it be even better if those blokes were adorned with razor-sharp razors all over their bodies, thus widening the scope for gratuitous bloodletting? Well now that dream nears realisation with Victory Boxing, for the protagonists in this game are made out of polygons, giving them plenty of angular corners and sharp-edged muscles. Sadly JVC have skimped on the claret, but from this tiny acorn surely a mighty oak of real-life gouge 'n' gash sports action can be grown? God, boxing shouldn't be outlawed – it should be compulsory.







At first play Victory Boxing seems a bit slow and cranky. But perseverance is the key to gaming nirvana. The only reason the game seems slow and cranky is because your untrained novice boxer *is* slow and cranky. It takes a bit of time and training before you start yielding proper gameplay results. And it's not just a case of waiting for your stats to improve so you can surpass the next fighter up. You've got to learn new skills as a player, judge the tactics of your opponent and generally use your brain and fingertips in almost religious spiritual harmony. The addition of the special moves and combos is a minor master stroke. Your fighter isn't exactly limited to start with, but the super-powerful (but hard to time) extra techniques you pick up along the way require a fairly deep knowledge of the game to implement seamlessly into a strategy. And given that some big dude is battering away at you constantly all the while you're trying to figure out how to get back at them this doesn't make for an easy task.



You can fight as or against female opponents, which you might like if you're a feminist or some kind of sicky wife-beater.

The three damage bars are probably the real stars of the show, though. Where most boxing games rely on a single energy bar (like martial arts beat 'em ups) the triumvirate of considerations foisted upon the player by his defence, punching and overall stats forces the player to know when to box, not just how. If your punching bar is low you'll find it nigh-on impossible to floor your opponent no matter how many blows you land, and if your defence is low it's best to block and retreat to save yourself from a decking. And it's no use just steaming in and raining down punches indiscriminately – if any do connect they'll do nowt and you'll also tire your boxer out, leaving him (or her) open to a quick flooring with a single hit, no matter how high your overall energy.



The great gameplay is backed up perfectly by the rest of the package. The graphics are well drawn and move convincingly, plus each fighter has their own individual appearance and (most importantly) fighting style which adds some character. The sound is a little sparse, but the punching effects are realistic and the occasional commentary adds atmosphere. The only possible balk is in the lastability ballpark. Once you've reached the top there's nowhere else to go, unless you've got a plentiful supply of human challengers waiting to take up the gauntlet. However, reaching the top in the first place is an admirable enough feat, and a thoroughly entertaining one at that.

RAD AUTOMATIC





Even if you don't like boxing games you'll probably fall for this one. There's more to it than you'd ever imagine. Unless you've read our Showcase on it.

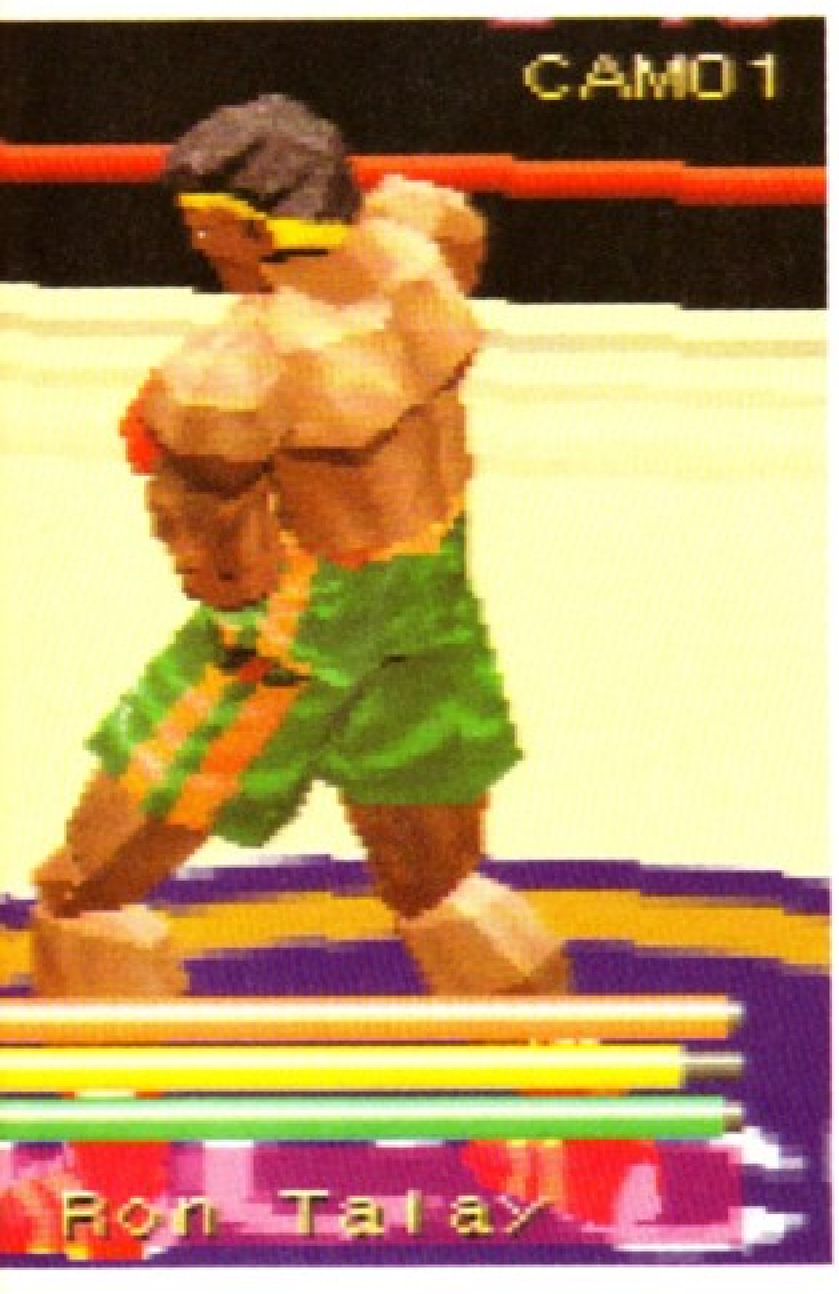








Victory Boxing

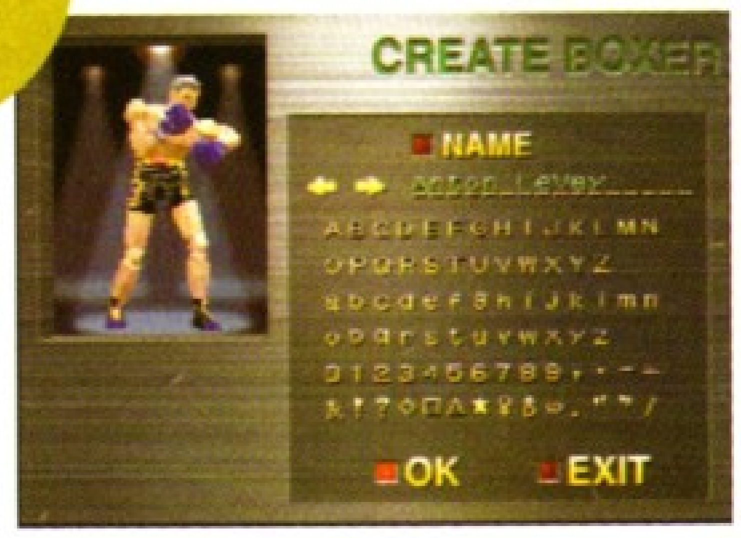




These training sections allow you to build your attributes strategically. The potential impact on your stats is shown in dark blue.



The initial boxer select screen gives you a full rundown on a fighter's past performance, including how their victories were victored.



As you can see, you could even name your boxer with a strange string of symbols, like that little Prince feller.







Some boxers doing their boxing thing. The different camera angles obviously make for a televisual feast of unprecedented proportions.





One of the best boxing games yet seen, and well worth a look.

graphics	90
sound	82
playability	91
lastability	82
overall	89%

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	BEAT 'EM UP
RELEASE	DECEMBER



In these wondrous days of the Saturn, arcade-perfect conversions might be common place. But it wasn't so long ago that you couldn't hope to get a decent replica of an arcade game on a home system. So when the then new-kid-on-the-block Megadrive, produced a near-perfect conversion of Sega's brilliant Golden Axe coin-op, everyone went wild! And so history repeats itself once more, as Golden Axe comes to the Saturn.











Of course, the aged Golden Axe coin-op would look pretty unimpressive by today's standards. And indeed, the not-so-close-as-we-remembered Megadrive conversion is now tragically dated (as some lucky punters will find out this Christmas when they get a Megadrive and Sega's Megagame pack). So an arcade perfect conversion on the Saturn doesn't sound like such a great prospect at all really, does it?

Ah, but worry ye not, because Saturn Golden Axe isn't actually a conversion of the crusty old coin-op at all, but in fact a conversion of a much newer AM1-designed coin-op known as Golden Axe: The Duel. What's more, it's not just arcade perfect, it's arcade EXACT! You see, The Duel coin-op is actually a Titan Board game, which means it uses the same hardware as the Saturn. In other words, it's a straight coin-op to Saturn port over, just like VF Remix.

And just like Remix, it's a one-on-one beat 'em up. Yep, gone are the scrolling battle-filled quests of original formula Golden Axe, now replaced by... fights. Choosing from one of ten warriors, you have to fight each of the others to win. Or, in two-player mode you just fight your opponent's selected warrior. It's the usual one-on-one routine, but with the added Golden Axe flavour. The original characters – Kain Blade the barbarian (previously known as Ax Battler), Milan Flare (the swordswoman formerly known as Tyris Flare) and Gillius Thunderhead the dwarf – are all in there. As is Death Adder, amazingly enough as a selectable character.



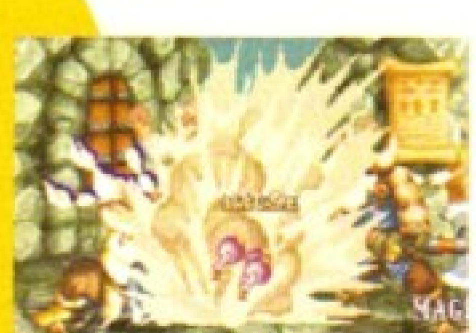
Adding the most novel element to the game though, the little imp from Golden Axe scampers onto screen. And as in the original game, he releases magic potions when whacked. Collect a full complement of these potions and your character can become magically imbued, pulling off spectacular screen-sized magic attacks, providing you know the secret key combinations to unleash them. Performing these devastating magic attacks soon becomes objective of each fight.

Golden Axe: The Duel might not compete on the same graphical terms as 3D fight games such as VF. There is however, no doubt that its sprite-based graphics are mightily impressive. Large well-animated cartoony characters, lush backdrops and plenty of speed-lines and blood splashes, all accompanied by great sound effects and music, make The Duel a flashy game indeed. And, perhaps more importantly, its Street Fighter-style range of moves provides some very addictive combat. Golden Axe: The Duel is definitely an enjoyable game, all the more so if you're a Golden Axe fan. The problem is, VF2 and X-Men: Children Of The Atom are just around the corner. Both of which are virtually guaranteed to provide better fighting action. I'd be inclined to spend my money on one of those.

TOM GUISE



This is probably the most spectacular character in the game – and not just because he's big either. He fights with giant knives, easily making mincemeat out of other characters.















Golden Axe: The Duel



Viking frenzy! These axe-wielding monsters will stop at nothing to quench their bloodlust.



Whoa there! That's a pretty damned impressive fireball move you've got there, boy.



See – there's hope for all you overweight gamesplayers yet. Even if you do have to resort to extreme violence.







A highly enjoyable beat 'em up that's unfortunately outclassed by better titles. One for hardcore fight fans only.

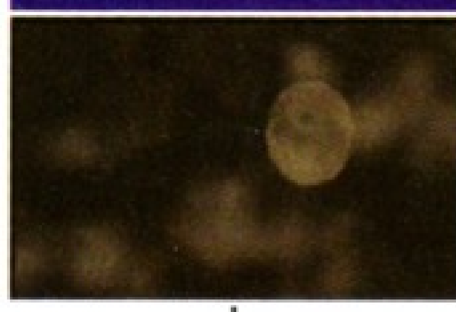
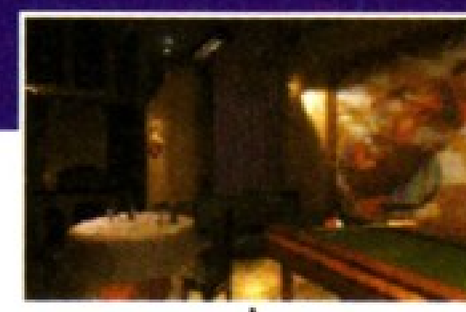
graphics	84
sound	89
playability	86
lastability	82

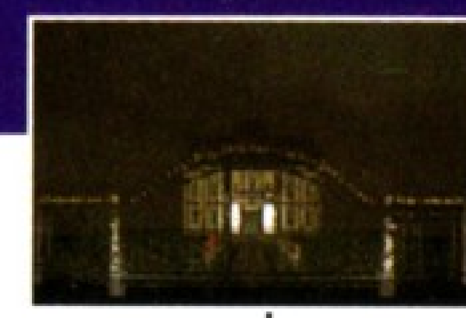
overall

85%

review

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	ADVENTURE
RELEASE	NOVEMBER



Devoted Sega fans may remember Mansion of Hidden Souls from a couple of years back, when it appeared on the Mega-CD. But a lot has happened since then, and you'll be glad to hear that this puzzler has been given the 32-bit treatment to bring it into the next generation of software.

It has to be said that when it was first released on the Mega-CD, Mansion of Hidden Souls did receive something of a hammering, mainly because the FMV window was absolutely tiny, and the gameplay was just far too easy – in fact we managed to crack the game in little over an hour.

At first glance though, it seems as though at least one of these problems has been sorted – the FMV window is much larger and although the quality of moving images are still a bit ropey, it's a vast improvement on the 16-bit version – but then that's only to be expected. Your aim is to investigate the cause of the full red moon which seems to be turning most of the inhabitants of the creepy mansion a bit doolally. Well, actually, they're all bit doolally anyway, because they've all decided that never stepping outside the house is much better than living out their previous lives in the real world. By talking to each character in every room you'll discover vital clues and purloin objects that will help you to unravel the eerie mystery that surrounds the house. The adventure is also set against the clock, and although you can save your game, if you run out of time, you can only replay it with the same amount of time left from when it was last saved.

Luckily, this doesn't make much difference, as the proceedings are for the most part, fairly easy. However, it is still nice to go through the motions anyway, purely to see some of the rooms in the house. Unfortunately though, despite being set in ghostsville, you never feel very excited about what's going on – it's just not macabre enough and there's no real tension involved in the gameplay, apart from the race against the clock.

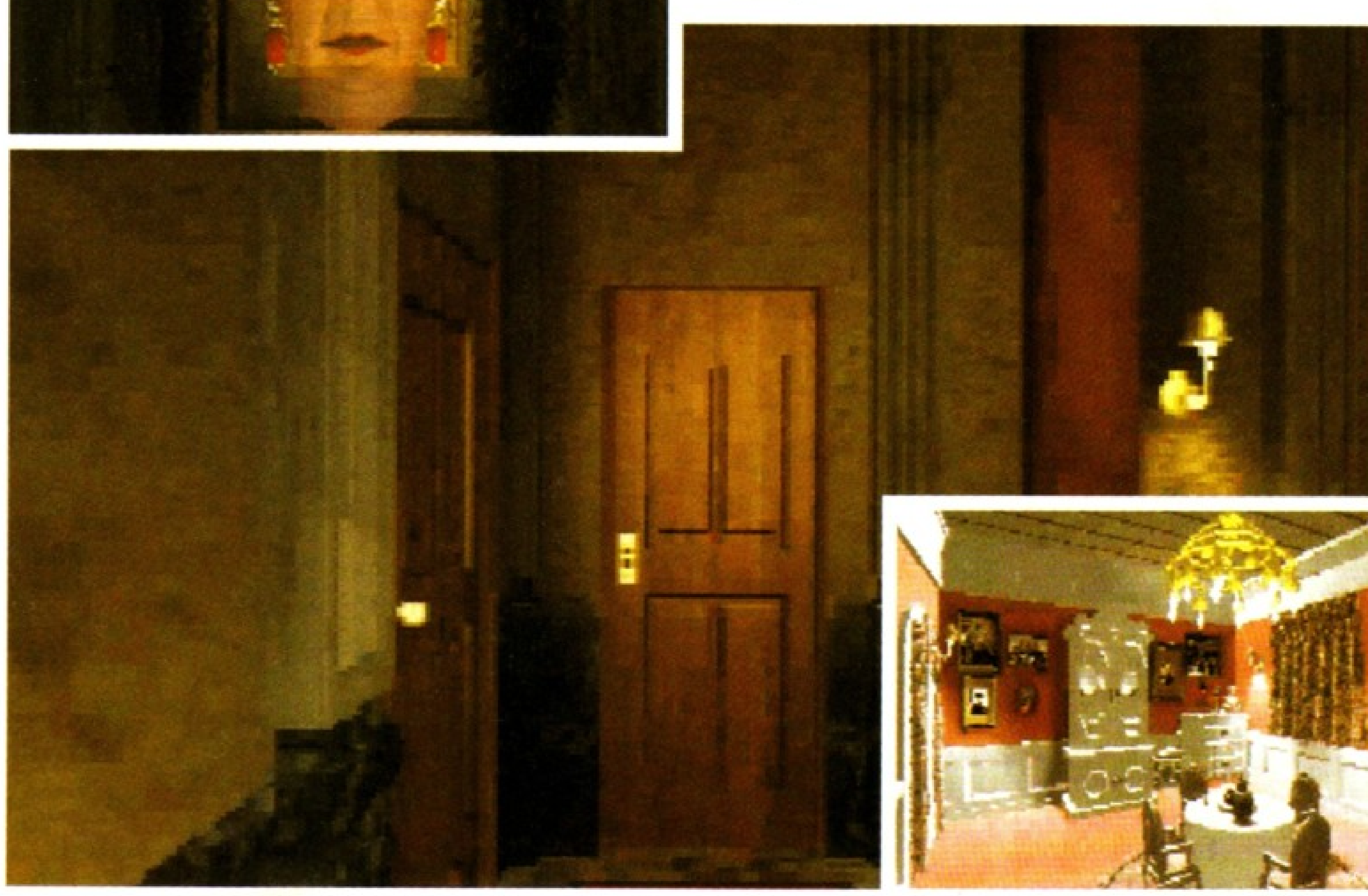
This is proved even further when you interact with some of the characters in the game. Some of them are supposed to be genuinely scary, but the choice of voices for each person is hilarious. The gunman sounds like a Playschool presenter and most of the others are just poor James Earl Jones rip offs.

Still, this is the only game of its type currently available on the Saturn, and it is fairly entertaining. It's just not in-depth enough to either last very long, or satisfy any fans of puzzle type games. Plus to cap it all off, the story line is a bit outdated – surely what we want from this type of game is a cyberpunk style thriller – not Jackanory after a couple of bad pints.

SAM HICKMAN




The rendered backdrops in Mansion of Hidden Souls look really, really good, but it's a bit of a shame that there's not more ace gameplay to back it all up. Well, any ace gameplay, actually.



Mansion of hidden souls

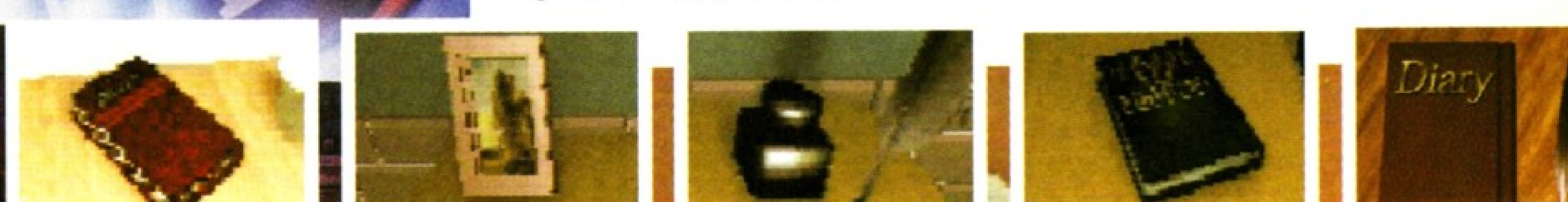






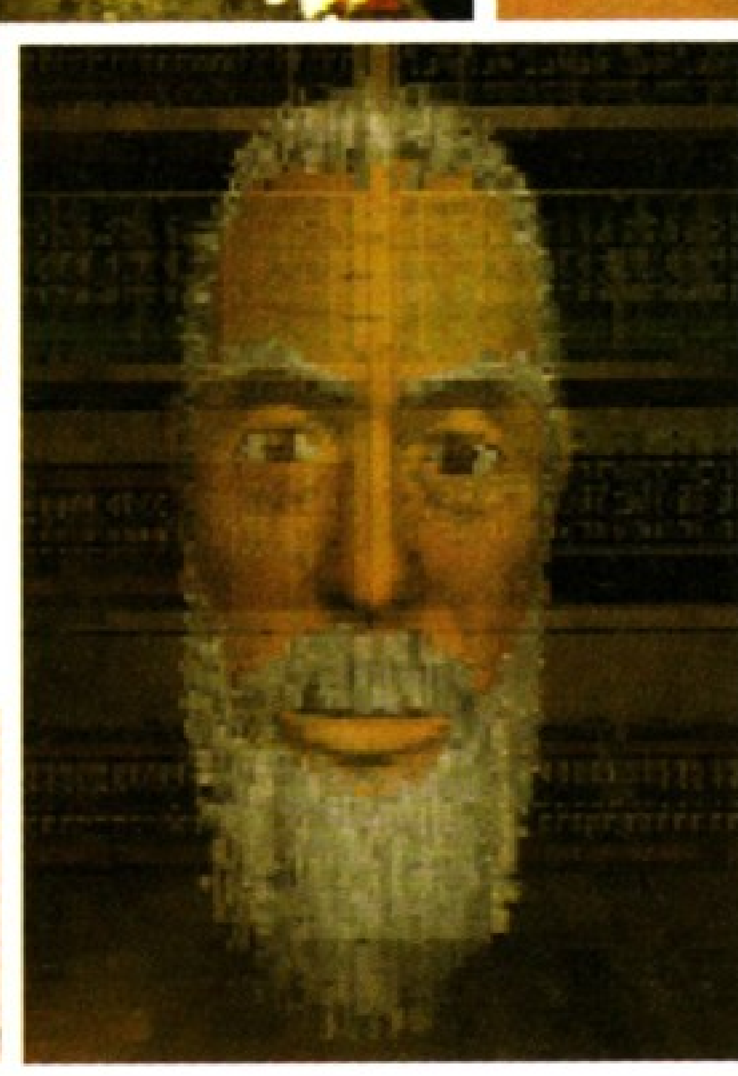


This fluffy pink boudoir houses one of the mansion's many occupants. All of who will tell you to "get out" on no uncertain terms.



Ooh. Scary. Actually, although most of the characters in the game are supposed to induce god-fearing horror, they don't. Well, maybe just a little, then.



Entertaining in places, but the game structure is a bit outdated and the story is sometimes dull.

graphics	79
sound	84
playability	71
lastability	67

overall

69%

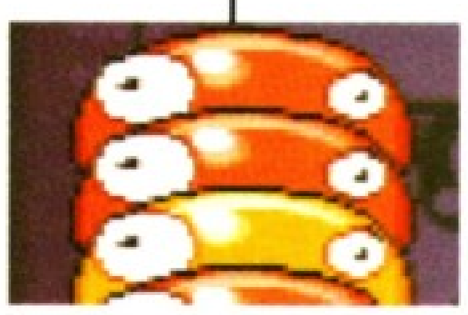


BY	MARUBENI
PRICE	£39.99
STYLE	PUZZLE
RELEASE	DECEMBER



Live the life of a beautiful cartoon with Hebereke's Popoon. An everyday story of jelly-like things and their animated masters.








Hebereke is ace. He's like a little flightless fowl thing with a tiny little cute beak, and all his friends are equally enchanting squirrel things or ghosts or aliens. They're all exceptionally sweet and lovable. I have Hebereke fridge magnets on my oven at home, such is my affection for the little fellow and his pals. But despite his adorability I find it very difficult to play his games. his first outing on the – boo hiss – SNES was quite good. All his appearances since then have left me disappointed.

But this, Hebereke's Popoon, is the Saturn conversion of that initial title, the cart that led to my falling in love with Hebe in the first place. So surely it must be good. Please let it be good, Sunsoft, for I love Hebereke more than life itself.



But hark, what dark through yonder window breaks? This isn't a conversion of the original Popoon at all, but a revamped edition of the twee Mean Bean Machine clone. The idea of the game is to match up four Popoons (little blobby jelly things which drop in pairs from the top of the screen) of the same colour, either in any adjoining formation of strictly by straight line status (depending on your difficulty setting), whereupon they disappear. To make life harder tiny effigies of the main Hebmeister characters (known as Poro Poros) sit suspended in mid air, jittering around one space left to right or up to down. Each character has their own colour, and the only way to destroy these graven Hebereke (or Oh Chan or Sukezaemon) idols is to match them up with three or more Popoons of the correct hue. The removal of all these Mini Pops images is the aim of each level of the one-player game. The two-player game introduces special attacks, which are activated by popping more than one line of Popoons with one blob-drop. So it all sounds pretty straightforward. And with a game that straightforward, following such a trusted formula, it must be impossible to screw up.








All of the hebereke characters are really really cute, but in this case, it doesn't make for a very good game, purely because the action isn't exciting enough to hold your attention for very long. Mean Bean Machine 2 should be loads better.

But that's exactly what Sunsoft have done. Having the Poro Poros awaiting destruction at the outset of the level is a bad thing, not because it makes the game harder (which isn't a bad thing) but because it just confuses the player, especially as their mobility makes it impossible to plan ahead. The one-player game is either way too hard (with straight line Popoon matches only) or laughably easy (with any quartet allowed). And the two-player game suffers by making the special moves too hard to achieve, except by fluke. If you're really really into this sort of game you might like a look, as it's the only example of the genre currently available for the Saturn. But a superior Tetris clone can't be far behind.

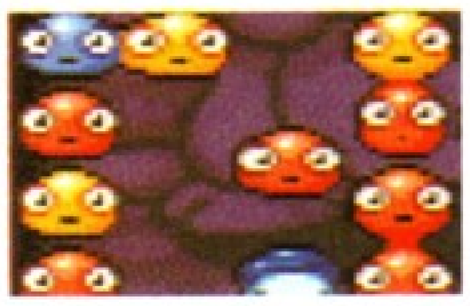
RAD








Hebereke's POPOON


Not as good as it looks, unfortunately.






Either rock hard or ridiculously easy.



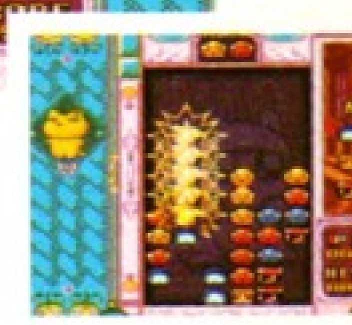
It's a shame that this is such a poor conversion, as it was a really good game on cartridge format. What's going on? Are they all stupid or something? How did they mess it up?



Becomes too confusing at times to tell what's going on.








There's been plenty of examples of excellent tetris clones on Sega formats. However, Hebereke is way too dull to really make the grade on the Saturn.



Not exactly awful, but a pedestrian example of a classic puzzle format.

graphics	87
sound	89
playability	71
lastability	65

overall **68%**





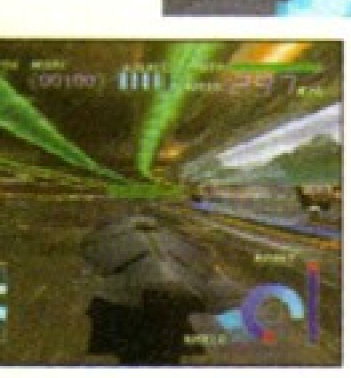
review

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£49.99
STYLE	RACING
RELEASE	DECEMBER



In the future we'll all drive to work in floating cars, like in The Jetsons. But why wait another three hundred years for technology to catch up with your desires when you can drive a floating car in Virtual Nearly Reality with your Saturn? Perhaps because Cyber Speedway isn't that good. We investigate.









These shots make Speedway look lovely. But it's not much fun, we're afraid.





This originally appeared in Japan with the unintentionally hilarious name of Gran Chaser. If only Sega UK had had the presence of mind to keep the title and ditch the game attached to it. Imagine a game which casts you as a rest home rep, chasing senior citizens around their bungalows with a big net, attempting to ensnare them and cart them off to your Twilight Pastures home. Or some bizarre abstract/surrealist piece where a man in a bar follows up each beer with a shot of gran. Although that might not make such a good game.

But no-one thinks like that in business. No, they just kept the expensively-produced commodity and changed the name. So what we're left with is Cyber Speedway, a race game starring some floating cars. And you, the lucky player, are invited to drive one around a series of race-track-type race tracks. Indeed, one of your friends is invited too, if you fancy a bit of split-screen head-to-head action.

Of course, this might seem pretty tempting. After all, Daytona is resolutely dual-play free. But hold your horses there tiger – chances are you'd feel worse off parting with cash for Cyber Speedway unless you're the hardest of hardcore friend-smiting enthusiasts with a permanent Speedway partner by your side. The trouble is, whilst Cyber Speedway is a good enough concept the mechanics of the handling haven't been thought through. It's all very well having your car float above the ground, but if you're going to do that you've got to think hovercraft, not icy roads. As it stands the vehicles in Cyber Speedway behave like they have no traction, as opposed to acting like they're powered by massive big retro-thruster things which keep them levitated. The drift of the machines and the pull of momentum have been pretty much overlooked, which may disappoint physics fans.



It's not all bad, though. The course designs are pretty swish, varied in both graphical style and tortuosity. There's plenty of racing skill challenges to be met on each track (except the computer opponents) . There's also plenty of scope to customise your floating car thing and mount big weapons on your bonnet with which to atomise the competition. And it's virtually clipping-free. In fact, the truth is that if Cyber Speedway wasn't so crap, it'd probably be brilliant. All the elements are there, but the handling of the skimmers and general feel-ing of not-much-going-on mean it's nowhere near the quality of Daytona or the forthcoming Sega Rally.

RAD





CYBER Speedway





Some of the wonderful opposition.





The excellent big long snake monster in the background is one of many who circulate this track, raining down frasmatic bolts of electrical energy upon your little car as you go underneath them at the wrong time. And they look like the snake monsters in Panzer Dragoon.



An exciting first-person view shot.



Another one. Even better.




Well designed, but poorly executed – that's Cyber Speedway all over.

graphics	90
sound	82
playability	71
lastability	58

overall

68%

ISSUE 2 IS ALMOST HERE

MAXIMUM



EARTHWORM JIM 2	89
KOLIBRI	90
GARFIELD	90
SUPER SKIDMARKS	91
PHANTASY STAR IV	91
ZOOP	92
PAC-PANIC	92
TIPS	93

16-Bit | Megadrive

review SEGA

BY	VIRGIN
PRICE	£49.99
STYLE	PLATFORM
RELEASE	NOVEMBER 1995



EARTHWORM Jim 2

Shiny Entertainment have established themselves as something special in video games, with only two projects under their belts. Lucky old Interplay, who have now snapped them up. Virgin should however be consoled with getting one of the best Megadrive games this year to clean up at Christmas.

Jim, the super-empowered garden worm, is back with a vengeance. His further adventures are just as, to employ a hackneyed term, 'zany' as those before, but the gamut of action is much wider-ranging, with the style of game changing on a level by level basis. And every one, in every way, is sickeningly well implemented.

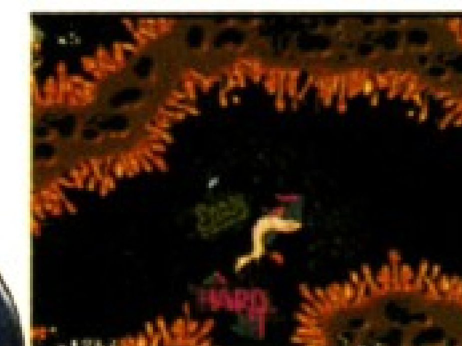
For the clutch of conventional platform levels, Shiny have taken an original approach on each. You start by dropping pigs down a chute, graduate to carrying dairy cattle to the milking sheds to latterly file sheaves of paper in killer cabinets. In between, the game meanders down shoot 'em up paths and a hilarious sub-game where you bounce pups off a huge marshmallow.



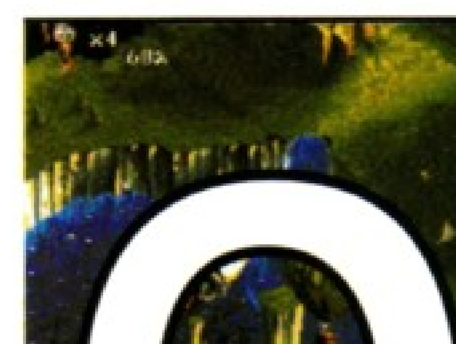
There is no part of the game which does not utilise the full potential of the machine, or indeed the potential of the player. There are trials for the former with amazing graphics manipulation on the Lorenzo's Soil, and tests for the latter with the tricky inertial control of the blind salamander. But everything has a relaxed and confident tone — they even find time and space for a spoof game show.

Earthworm Jim 2 is not the hardest game ever produced, but is far from being the easiest and is just so potently playable that every moment of play feels like good value for money. If you're serious about having the best in your Megadrive games collection, then you have no option but to add this.

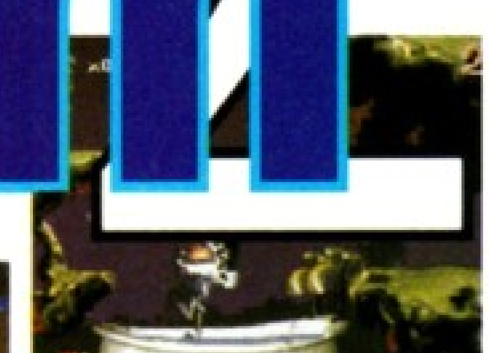
ANGUS SWAN





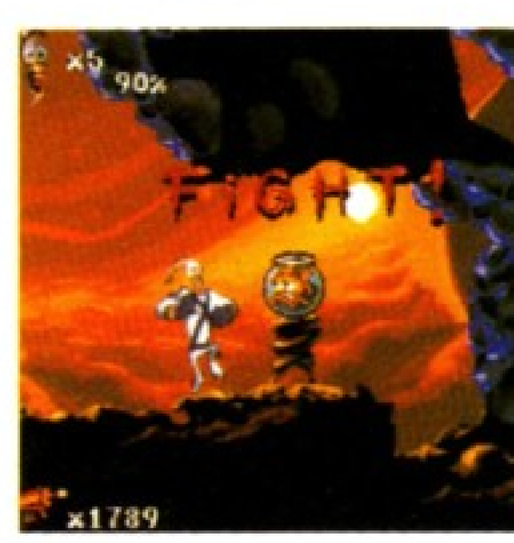








Earthworm Jim employs some of the best graphics ever seen on the Megadrive and is one of the best titles lined up for Christmas.







graphics	94
sound	93
playability	95
lastability	92
overall	94%

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	PLATFORM
RELEASE	DECEMBER

Garfield

Caught in the act



Obviously mindful of the huge market open to the character's licensees, Sega have spent over a year developing this Megadrive title. It boasts 33 levels of platform fun, which kick off when Garfield and Odie's television set explodes. Fearful of retribution from his usually docile owner, Garfield sets about fixing the set. His efforts only result in unleashing an electrical storm which sucks him and his doggie nemesis Odie into the television. Forced to navigate the broken set's electrically crackling innards, the lasagne-loving puss must then combat Odie, John and various other ne'erdowells through reruns of the old films still buzzing around the circuits.



Once you've overcome the novelty of eliciting any movement from the world's most notorious sleep junkie, you're left with a fairly unoriginal platformer. Getting from one side of the screen to the other is the order of the day, with only the odd oblique puzzle and giant Odie bosses to present a real challenge.



More time should have been spent polishing aspects of a decidedly patchy package – the backgrounds, for example, seem bland in comparison with faithfully realised characters such as Garfield and Odie. The unadventurous level structures, meanwhile, have their already limited appeal diminished by some sluggish character control.

All of which makes you wonder whether a bowl of lasagne and a kip might not be a better idea.



Ooh look at that cheeky little monkey. What does he think he's up to, eh? Up to no good, I'll tell you that.





graphics	69
sound	65
playability	69
lastability	66
overall	67%

Megadrive | 16-Bit

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	DECEMBER

Kolibri



Novotrade may or may not mean anything to you. It's the programming team that brought you Ecco the Dolphin, one of the most successful and acclaimed games for the Megadrive. It's also the team that now offer you Kolibri.

Strange fish, Kolibri. Actually, Kolibri is a hummingbird, which until now have had little impact on video games. Novotrade have obviously set out to create something unusual. Toads, termites and ladybirds make their debuts as game denizens.

In an intro reminiscent of Ecco (many parts of the game are) Kolibri experiences a distressing shift in nature, with all the good hummingbirds are driven away by a plague of nasty insects. Your job is to bring back colour to the flowers and annihilate the bugs.

This is achieved by flying across a couple of dozen levels and taking part in a shoot 'em up of some scale. Kolibri, behind its sumptuous pastoral graphics and weird setting, is an honest-to-god blaster, offering a serious challenge.

Things aren't quite that simple, with forced-scrolling levels and less linear gameplay as the game progresses. Kolibri enters a maze of caverns and faces Ecco-esque puzzles before he can proceed. The latter areas of the game will challenge diehards, and some of the nicest parts of the game involve wicked enemies, like plants who suck you up like a hoover.

Large and complex, Kolibri offers value for money, but a certain dullness and insipidity accompanies it.

graphics	80
sound	81
playability	76
lastability	79
overall	78%

SUPER Skidmarks



BY	CODEMASTERS
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	DRIVING
RELEASE	NOVEMBER








What some game publishers would give to understand how Codemasters, a minnow compared to some in the business, can regularly top the charts with their Megadrive titles, when even the most extravagant marketing campaign for an expensive arcade conversion cannot ensure a big hit.

The truth isn't that elusive — they produce games like Super Skidmarks: shamelessly rooted in gameplay, whilst adopting slick presentation, and offering a genuine new gaming experience. Skids is a racer that offers more than a nod to the massive success Micro Machines, especially with its four-player option that utilises Codemasters' clever J-Cart.

Programmed by New Zealanders, Acid Software, Super Skidmarks uses a sophisticated isometric view for its stock-car setting. Although these screen stills are relatively unassuming, the shading and curvature on the dirt tracks is impressive on-screen, as is the animation of the cars enhances this effect as they bounce erratically around the playfield.

The Championship is set across four scenic areas, though in truth the layouts don't alter much — there are no track hazards — they just become larger and more torturous. This forms half the challenge. The other is a set of computer cars that have surely passed their advanced test.

Being a Codies production, there's a clutch of cheats, and a password option. This includes the 'cows on wheels' option, where the players race turbo-charged cattle in place of the regular cars.

Super Skidmarks is an excellently-constructed and enjoyable game, and while not possessing the same mystique of Micro Machines, it should find some fanatical supporters.

graphics	88
sound	84
playability	90
lastability	91

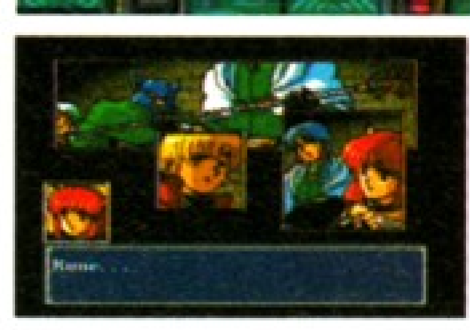
overall **90%**

PHANTASY STAR IV



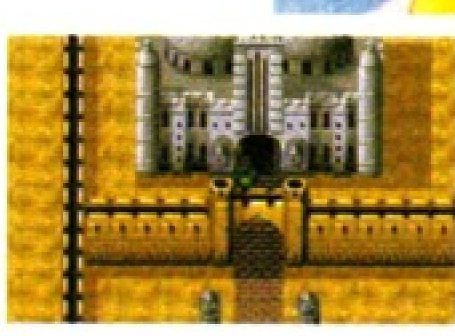
BY	SEGA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	RPG
RELEASE	NOVEMBER



Bet you're glad you bought a Saturn now, aren't you? Not exactly state-of-the-art.

Bringing the fourth installment in Sega's long-running RPG saga proved a problem for the UK arm of the company. Traditionally, games of this type have not been received as well here as they are in Japan. Although the US had done the translation work, the second consideration, the cost of a huge 24 Megabit cart, brought further reservations.




Now the decision to go ahead has been taken, the winners are Phantasy Star fans, who are treated to a vast chunk of action, that takes the plot well beyond the first three games.

The gameplay — controlling inventories, arming combatants and using spells — is not to everyone's taste. But the game succeeds by creating climactic moments, introducing new characters and powers, and taking many weird and wonderful plot turns. A new feature is the combo attacks, where various spells and powers produce devastating results. Anyone new to the genre may find it heavy going, especially as the game plays on the established Phantasy Star mythology.

24 Megs may seem par for the course in these days of mega carts, but bear in mind that this employs the memory in game and plot and not on graphics and sound. The save function is equally lavish, with three separate positions available. Pretty it is not, but the mysteries of Phantasy Star IV will continue to fox you well after the likes of Thor and Soleil have been put to one side.

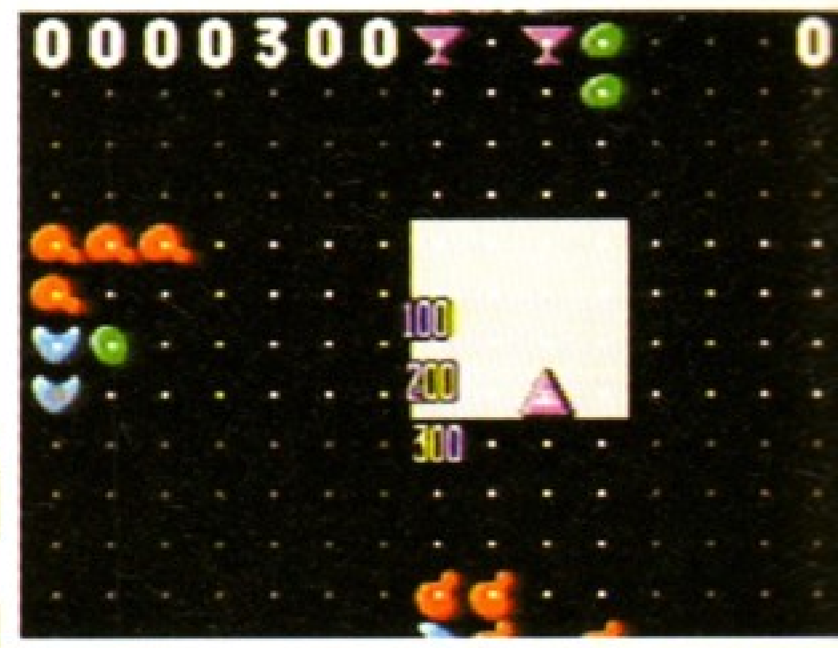
graphics	64
sound	77
playability	89
lastability	92

overall **90%**

Megadrive | 16-Bit

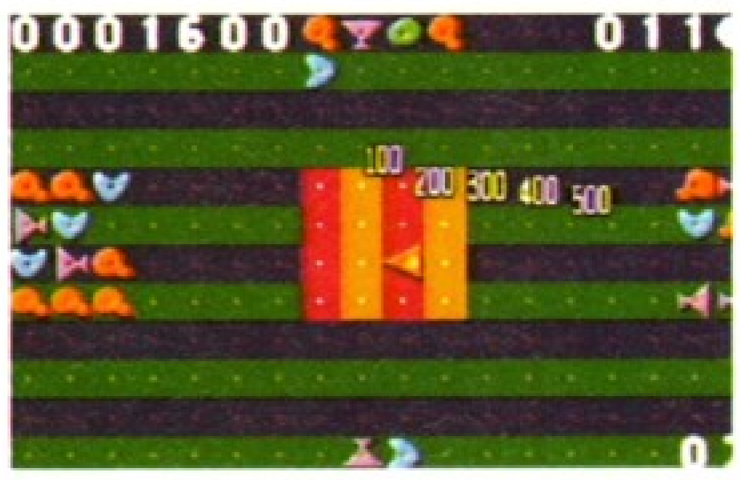
ZOOP

BY	VIACOM
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	PUZZLE GAME
RELEASE	NOVEMBER













Zoop Mania seems to be sweeping the console industry if the review scores this game has attracted are to be believed. To us it looks like they have indeed lost control of their senses. Mania is still classed as a mental debility in our medical handbooks.

Zoop is no less, and certainly no more than, a simplistic puzzle game, that borrows some of the plot from Tetris and adds a fair dash of originality. Placed in the centre square of the screen, you attempt to arrest the progress of advancing shapes by shooting them with your cursor. Whether they comply is down to what colour your cursor is. Add a few bonus items with limited power and you have Zoop.

In its favour, Zoop plays better than it looks, and it has the curious compulsiveness of Tetris to a degree. It is just not the sort of game that is best suited to expensive cartridges, especially when there is flashier and more developed fare around. Zoop mania may turn out to be short-lived. Just keep your wits about you.

graphics	65
sound	47
playability	63
lastability	57

overall **62%**

Megadrive | 16-Bit

PAC PANIC

BY	PHILIPS MEDIA
PRICE	£19.99
STYLE	MAZE
RELEASE	OUT NOW













When Pac-Man first appeared, Maggie Thatcher had just just become PM, the Atari VCS was the next generation home machine and game carts were about £30 each. Well, some things don't change! Fifteen years on, the cult of the rotund, canary-yellow Namco star is wearing rather thin. But not so thin that Philips can't find space for a budget cart starring Pac in a Tetris clone. Pac Panic bears a 1993 copyright, and extremely simplistic gameplay, but for all that, it's really rather fun. Blocks and ghosts fall into your vertical trough, with the occasional pac-man offered to gobble them up in sequence. The concept is supported by three modes of play: a single-player game of ever-increasing difficulty; a 100 level puzzle mode which allows you a limited number of Pacs to clear the screen. The final mode is a two-player battle game. Not much else to tell; the graphics are clear, the sound is good and if it had come out two years ago it would have cleared up. For twenty quid now it's well worth considering.

Cutting edge graphics and gameplay all the way through.

graphics	56
sound	84
playability	74
lastability	68

overall **72%**

TIPS



RISTAR

Here's yet another cheat password for Ristar. This one gives you a secret SUPER difficulty. Go to the password entry screen and put in the code SUPERB.

MEGA DRIVE

MORTAL *KOMBAT* 3

First of all, here's the cheat to access the obligatory cheat screen. When on the title screen with "Start" and "Option" press A, C, Up, B, Up, B, A, D. "Cheats" will appear and by selecting this you can access all of the characters' end screens, give yourself more continues or listen to any of the game's sounds.

Here's a few of the Kombat Kodes which should be entered on the two-player battle screen. There are more to kome, by the way.

To make it easier for you to learn how to enter each kode, we've shortened them to numbers. The first three digits of each kode correspond to A, B and C on controller 1 and the next three mean A, B and C on controller 2. Each number refers to the number of times you have to press each button to get the correct symbol.





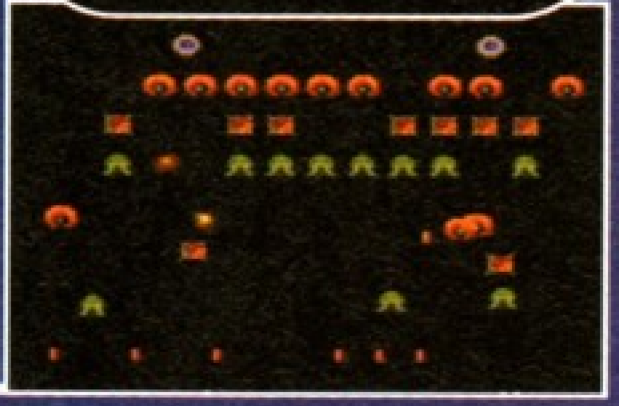
KEY

- 0 - Dragon
- 1 - MK
- 2 - Yin and Yang
- 3 - 3
- 4 - ?
- 5 - Lightning
- 6 - Goro
- 7 - Raiden
- 8 - Shao Kahn
- 9 - Skull

Player 1 half energy	033-000
Player 2 half energy	000-033
Player 1 quarter energy	707-000
Player 2 quarter energy	000-707
Throwing Disabled	100-100
Blocking Disabled	020-020
No energy bars	987-123
Dark Kombat	688-422
Randper Kombat	460-460
Unlimited Run	466-466
Psycho Kombat	985-125
Winner Fights Smoke	205-205
Winner Fights Noob Saibot	769-342
Winner Fights Motaro	969-141
Winner Fights Shao Kahn	033-564
Secret Game	642-468
"No Knowledge..." message	123-926
Strange Message	282-282







COMIX ZONE

Game credits fans must be going crazy over the prospect of this cheat. Go to the options screen then press and hold A, B and C then press Start. Quite amazingly, the programmer credits will appear! Brilliant!

PRIMAL *RAGE*

To play the secret 10-pin bowling game, start a fight with Armadon versus Armadon. Now make both characters perform the "Spinning Death" move (hold HQ+LQ, press B, F, D) so that they hit each other. Do it three times in a row and you can mow down the humans.

BATMAN *AND* ROBIN

To skip levels, pause the game and press B, A, Down, B, A, Down, Left, Up, C. It spells BAD BAD LUC. You'll skip to the next level.

MICROMACHINES *'96*

If you complete any of the one player tournaments in the game you'll get two extra multi-player tracks. Seeing as there are eight possible tournaments that means there are 16 hidden tracks, just in case you can't count.

These cheats should be entered as player names. Then restart the game and select 2, 3 or 4 player mode to see the extra options at the bottom. They give you the extra tracks without you having to work your way through like a man (or woman).

- GUFDON - Specials
- HORDON - Bonus Specials
- NODROG - Super Specials
- ALCHIE - Overdrive





Each one will add two tracks to the multi-player list, though they become a bit redundant seeing as the last one will give you all eight. When we find codes for the other eight we'll print them.

MEGA-CD

EARTHWORM JIM: SPECIAL EDITION

This cheat's brilliant.
To give Jim a black afro haircut, pause the game and press B, A, A, A, A, A, B, C.
To give him a red afro, pause and press C, A, A, A, A, A, B, C.
To give him antennae, pause and press B, C, A, A, A, A, B, C.
To give him a Groucho Marx disguise, pause and press A, A, A, A, A, A, B, C.

OUT NOW

GAME *of the month*

Clockwork Knight 2



BY	SEGA
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★★

Although the original Clockwork Knight adventure was somewhat ill-fated, this sequel proves that Sega still have what it takes when it comes to quality platforming action. It may just be the second half of the original adventure, but in game-playing terms it couldn't be more different from the original. This time, there's loads of neat trickery in each level – in addition to all the amazing bosses, there's tons of 3D type action, and the game itself is just much more in-depth than before. It's still fairly easy, but if you want, there's lots of hidden stuff to find which makes the game nigh-on impossible to complete. At just four levels again, this falls slightly short of becoming an essential purchase, but it's hugely impressive and is sure to please all platform fans







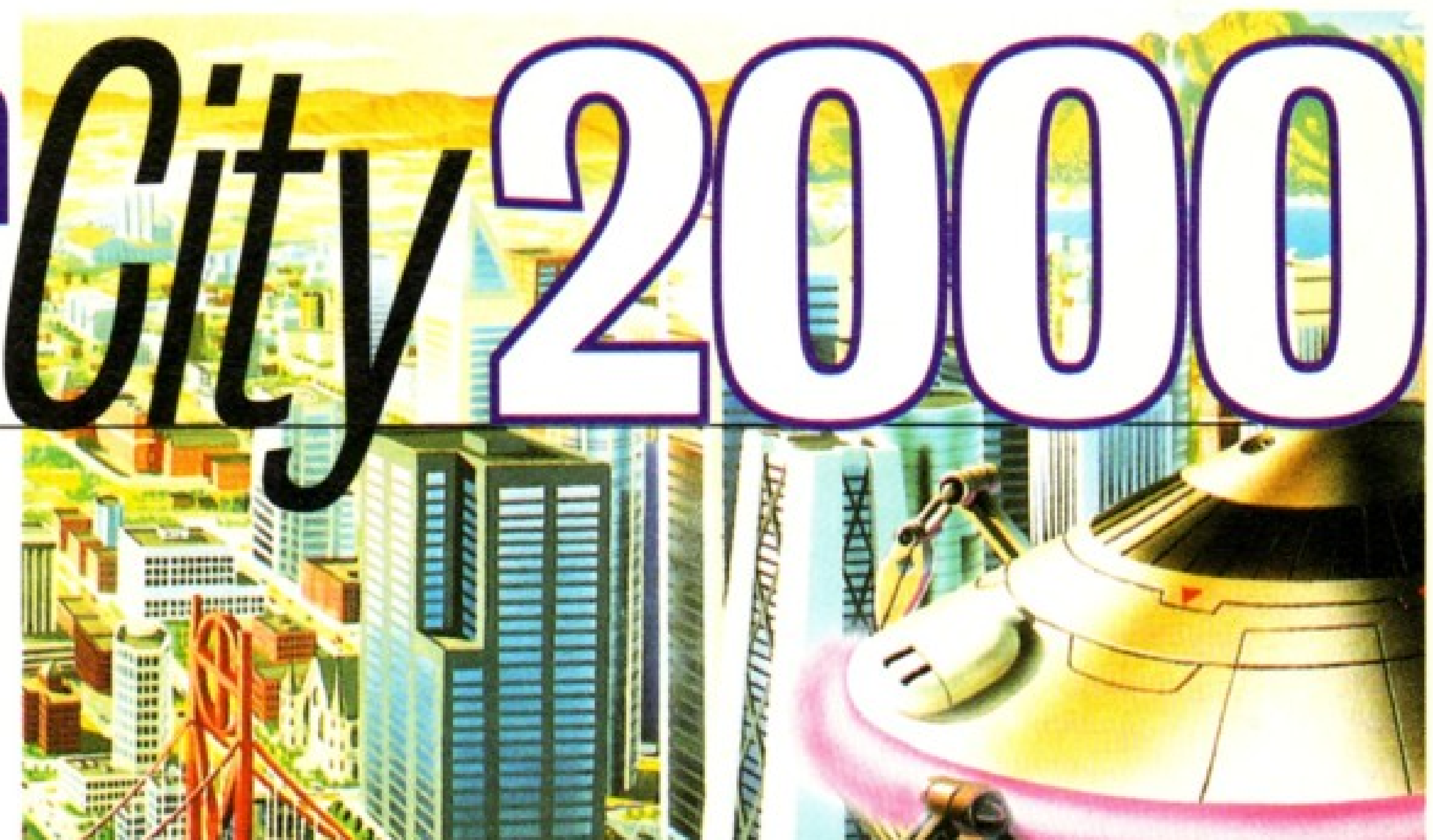






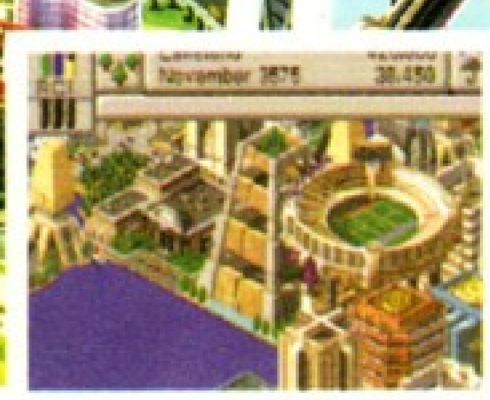


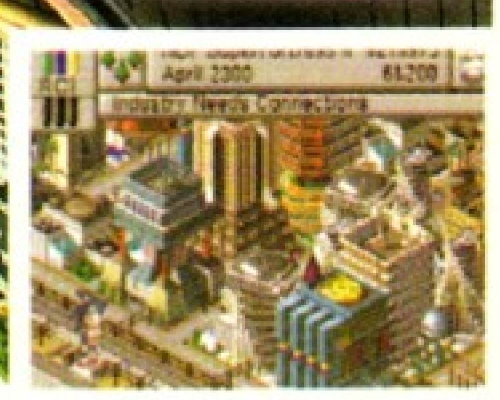
SimCity 2000



BY	SEGA
PRICE	£TBA
RATING	★★★★

Surely everyone and their dog has heard of Sim City by now – it's appeared on just about every technological programme going and has done the rounds on the PC circuit untold times. And there's just one reason for this – it's really addictive stuff. Build your own city and take responsibility for everything in it, from the water supply to the town's unemployment levels. This Saturn version has all the features from the original PC version, plus a few extra thrown in for good measure, making it one of the best strategy games available on the Saturn. It's a shame that this version is slower than its PC counterpart, but seeing as you'll need the patience of a saint to build up a good city anyway, a few more seconds wait shouldn't make that much difference.







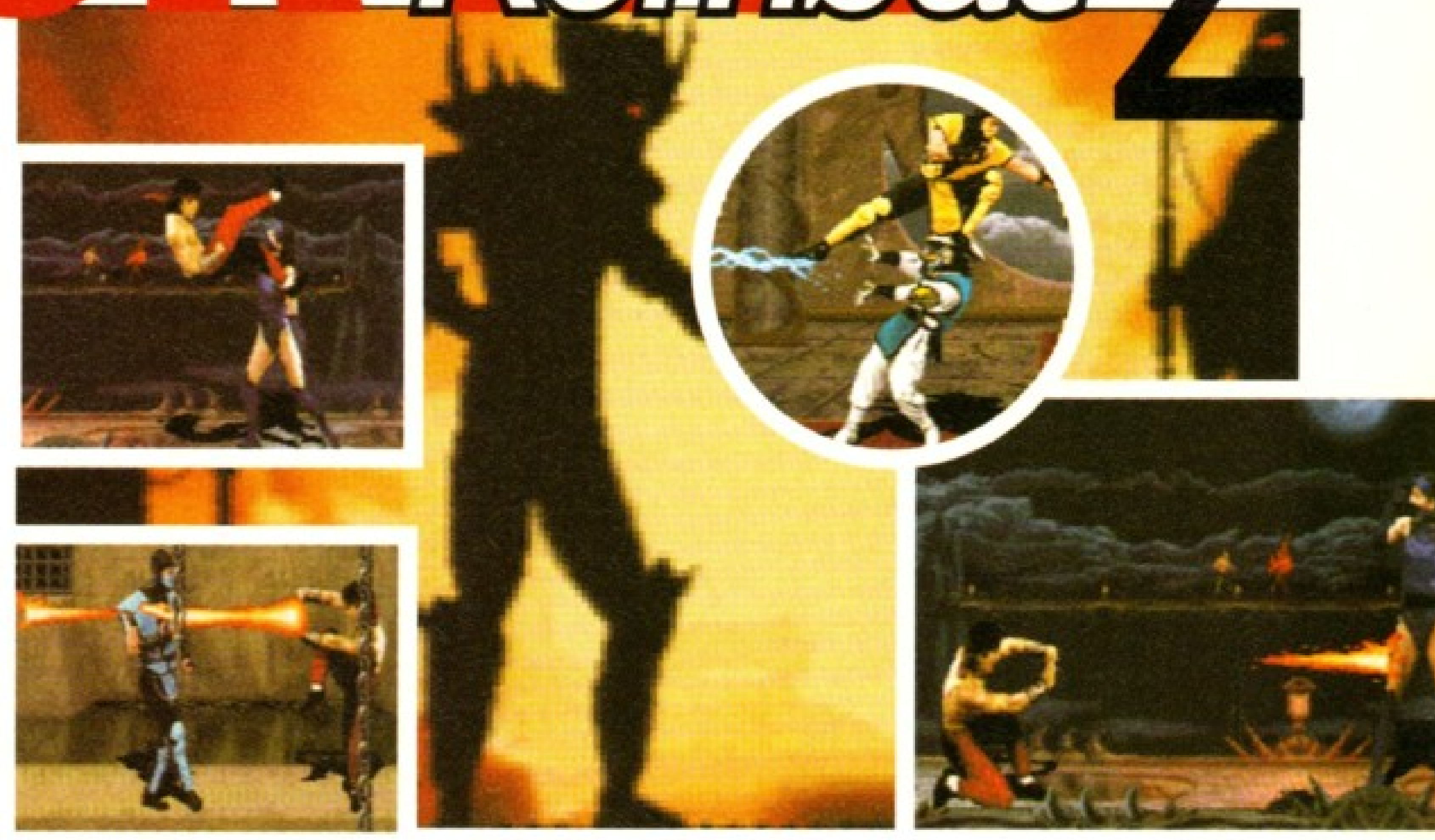




BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★★

MORTAL Kombat 2

Yeah, yeah, so it's arcade perfect. Which, really, is only to be expected when you consider the capabilities of the Saturn. And we know that this was one of the biggest games of last year, as well as being one of the best. But that's the whole point. No one's really that interested in it any more – especially when you can buy a fairly decent version of Mortal Kombat III on the Megadrive. In itself, this is as perfect conversion as you could hope for, and will certainly get the Kombat anoraks foaming at the mouth, but it just lacks excitement, Plus you can't help thinking that it was only released to ride the hype of Mortal Kombat 3, currently doing the rounds on the PC and Playstation. Still, nice enough, even if it is a little late.







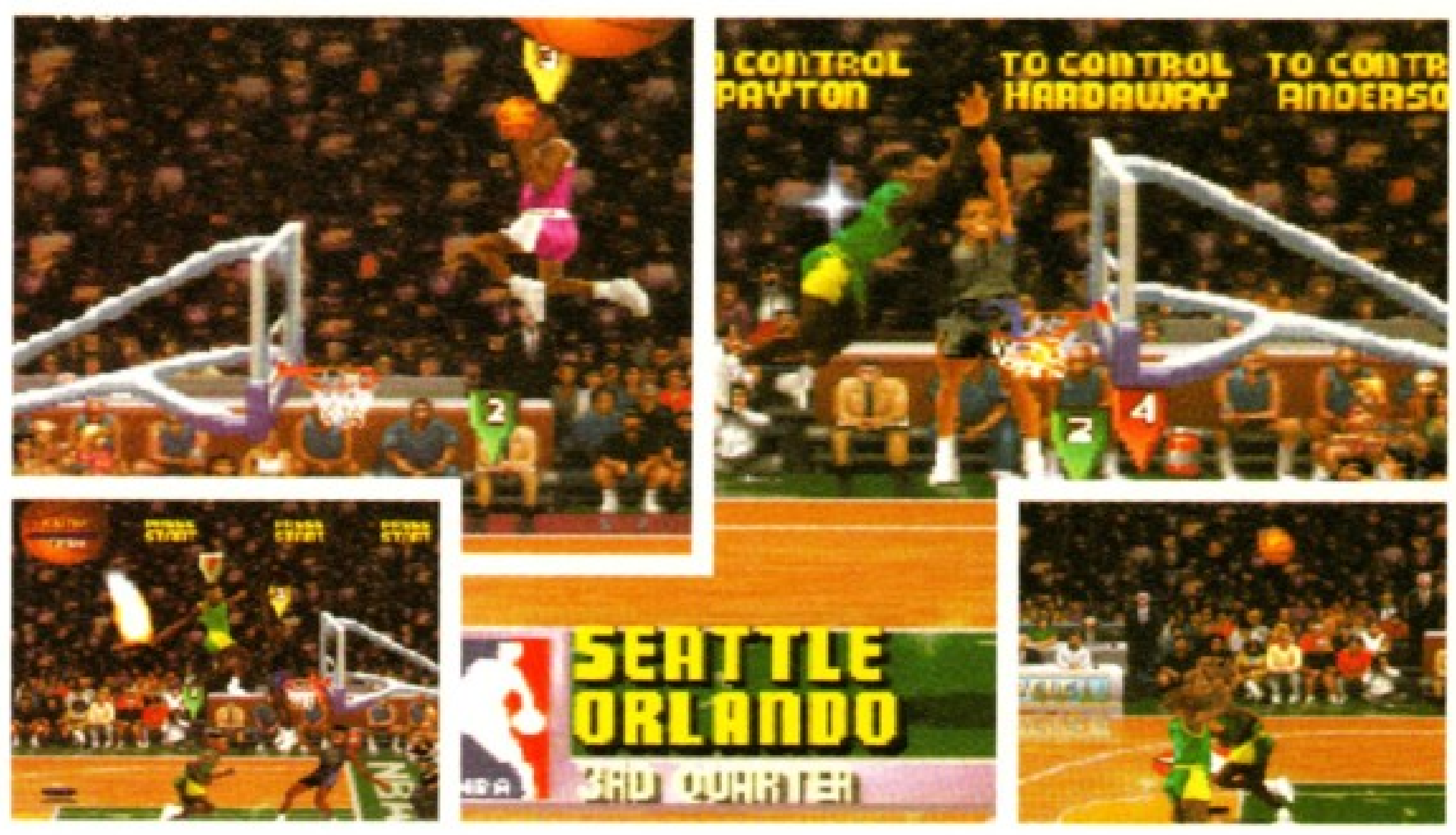


BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★★

NBA Jam



NBA Jam has been released on just about every game format known to man, so it comes as no surprise that it's turned up on the Saturn too. Luckily, this is one of the best versions of the title, and being arcade perfect, it's very difficult to find fault with any aspect of the game. Graphically of course, it's well within the Saturn's capabilities, so the fact that it comes with super smooth visuals plus all the secret characters and cheats is just about par for the course. Again, not a title we can get hugely excited about, but if you don't already own a copy of Jam in some form, this is your best bet.









BY	SEGA
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★★

World Series Baseball

Another one that's split the Sega camp. On one hand it could be said that this is the best baseball game ever to appear on a console. Yet on the other, you could say that it's just the same as every one of the other hundred-or-so sims that are already out there, albeit on inferior machines. What this does have over other titles of the same ilk though, is brilliant randomised speech that actually doesn't repeat itself completely every ten seconds or so. The gameplay is pretty impressive too, with sweeping camera angles and loads of different game options. Not suited to everyone, simply as the sport only has an obscure following over here, but it's pretty addictive, especially in multi player mode.





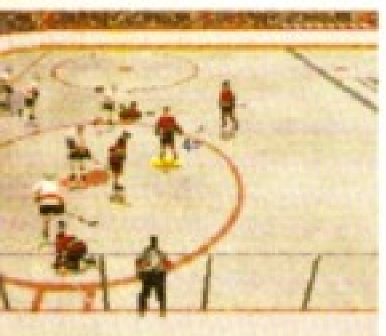
NHL Hockey



BY	SEGA
PRICE	£44.99
RATING	★★★

Hockey was always really successful on the Megadrive, mainly due to EA's succession of high-quality sims. So far, they haven't released any details regarding a Saturn version, but in the meantime, this homegrown Sega version of events should do nicely. As you'd expect there's tons and tons of options, the usual million-or-so stats, a multi player mode, and , come to think of it, the gameplay's not bad either. It doesn't quite have the staying power of EA's own hockey, but seeing as that's not likely to surface until next year, this will please everyone except the most niggly, trainspottery of hockey fans. Good stuff.











Rayman

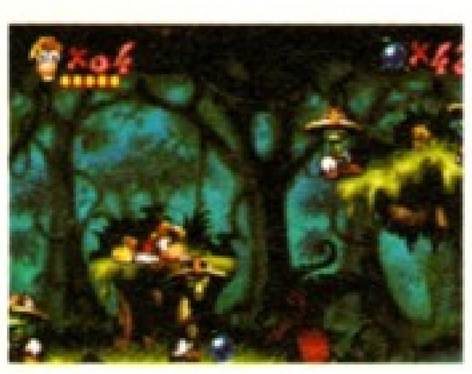


BY	UBISOFT
PRICE	£TBA
RATING	★★★

Hmmm. Now this is a bit of a tricky one. Rayman is the kind of game that you'll either love or hate. Unfortunately, the majority here at SATURN MAGAZINE fall in to the latter category. It's not that Rayman is an appalling title by any means - in fact there's lots of neat touches in there that at first give the impression that you're really going to be in for a treat. However, after playing it for any length of time you'll more than likely discover that it's grossly irritating and actually, not much fun at all. Although some of the platforming levels are designed really well, most of them are nigh-on identical with very little implemented to spice up the run-hit-run action. Platforming fans will probably love it anyway, but the majority will find it dull, and highly unoriginal.



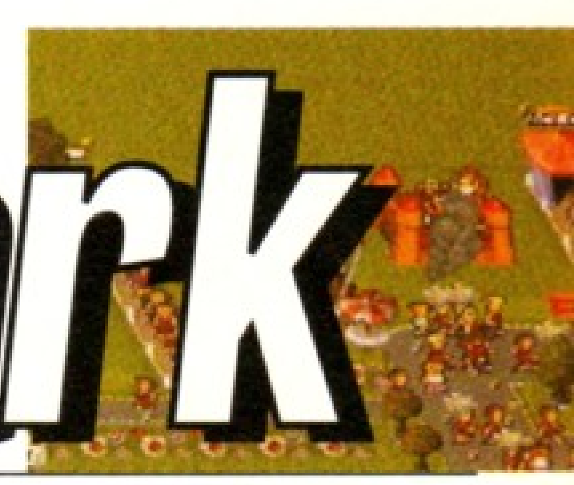






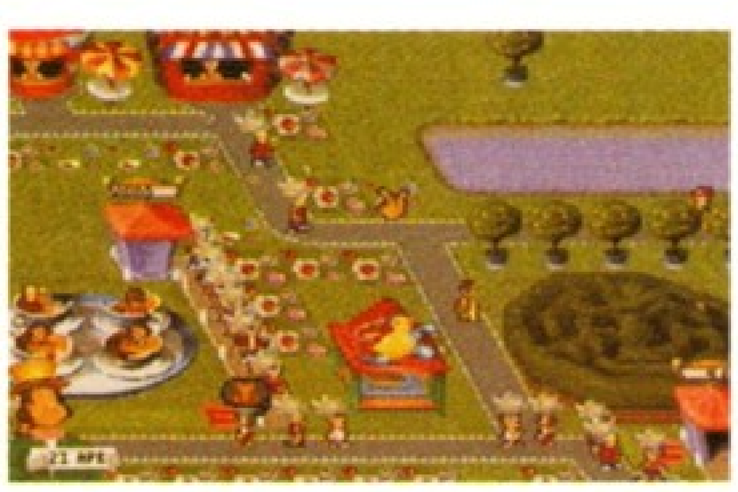


Theme Park



BY	BULLFROG
PRICE	£49.99
RATING	★★★★





Another title that's already appeared on a Sega format before, Theme Park has to be one of the most highly acclaimed games of all time. The object of the game is to build an amazing theme park up from nothing, and find a way to make an obscene amount of money. There's plenty of ways to do this – either provide the best service possible or rip everyone off down the line. The scope and lastability of the title is enormous and as well as being a bit taxing at times, it's also really good fun. Probably not the most exciting of titles just because the name has been around for so long, but easily one of the highest quality.



BY	SEGA
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★

Robotica



There's no point in denying it – everyone is after a decent Doom clone and Robotica just ain't it. The graphics may look the part, and at first, the atmosphere is really tense, but the gameplay doesn't hold up very well over the levels. If there were a few more robots to blast and the music helped the atmosphere along a bit then it may have been worth a look, but as it stands, this is a dull and pointless exercise.







CD FILMS

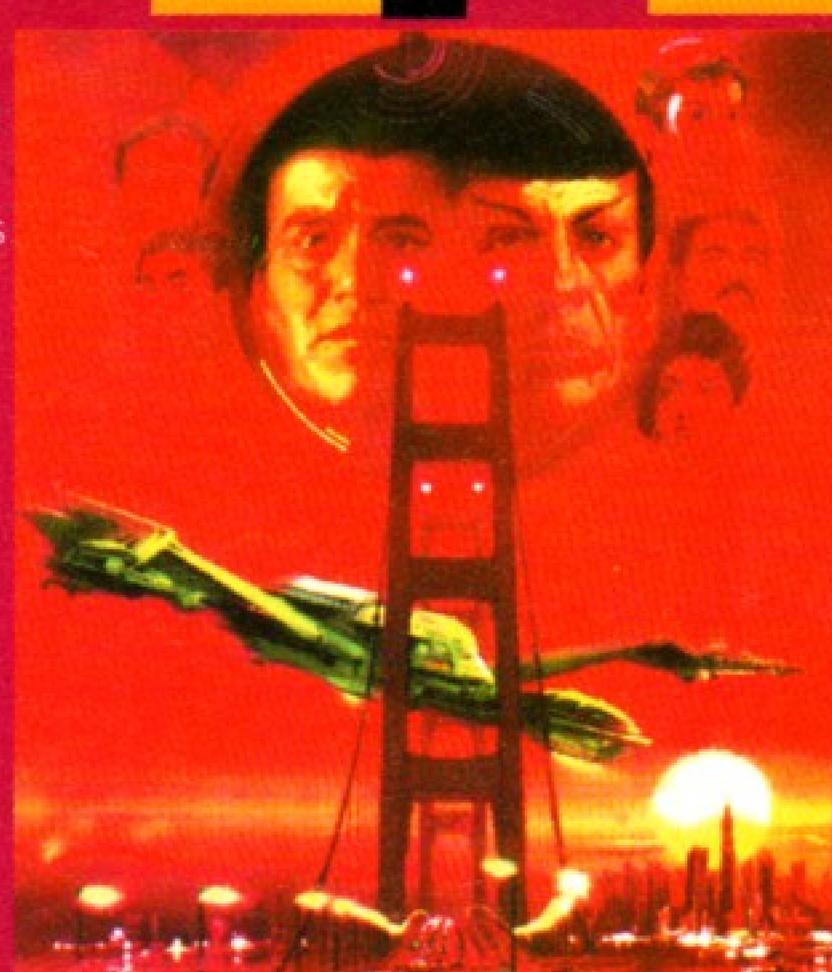
To play any of the following films or interactive music CDs, you'll need the Saturn Video CD Card..



STAR TREK IV – THE VOYAGE HOME

BY	POLYGRAM	PRICE	£17.99	RATING	★★★★

Directed by Leonard "Spock" Nimoy this is probably the best remembered and most-watched of the Star Trek movies. Die-hard Trekkie trainspotters might be a bit miffed by the lack of phaser action/alien babes etcetera, but the movie-going public loved it. It's fairly easy to see why, thanks to its irreverent tone which places the Enterprise crew in modern-day San Francisco on a hunt for killer whales (easy enough) and some nuclear missiles to power them back to the future (slightly harder). Not exactly challenging stuff, and the cast are knocking on a bit by now, but an entertaining diversion.



CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG

BY	POLYGRAM	PRICE	£17.99	RATING	★★★★★

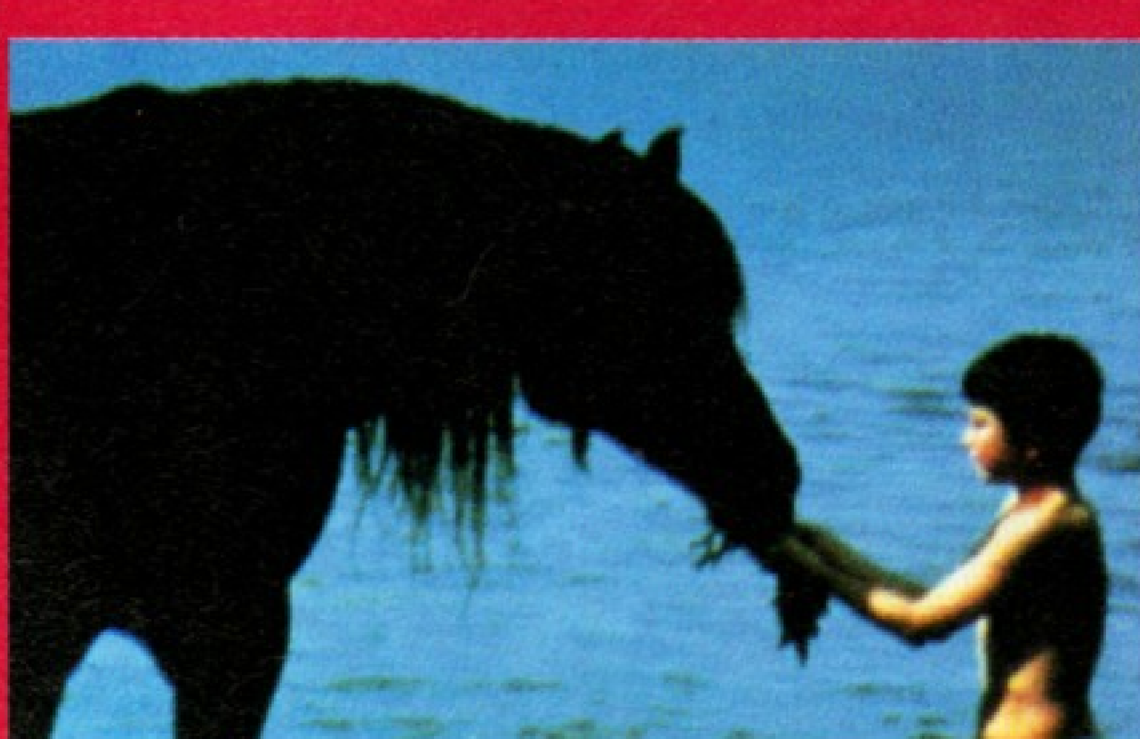
One of those ancient classics that reminds you just how completely out of its head British childrens' cinema once was. You've probably avoided watching it on the telly a couple of times by now, but it's a flick which everyone should see. The plot is far too complex to go into here, but needless to say it concerns a magical flying car, a sweet factory, a mad inventor, the evil Baron Bombburst of Vulgaria, and was written by James Bond creator Ian Fleming. Such is its amazing psychedelic appeal we're surprised it hasn't been made illegal yet. Ace.



THE BLACK STALLION

BY	POLYGRAM	PRICE	£17.99	RATING	★★★★

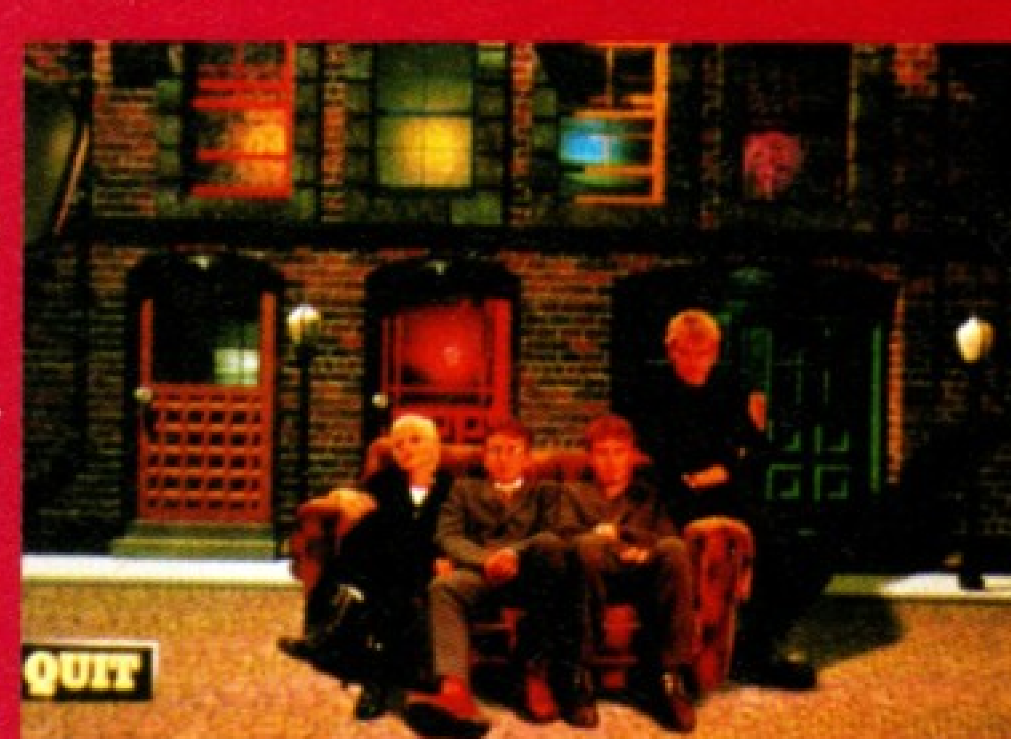
Ooh, it's one of those clever dual-level kid/adult movies. Essentially a kids movie detailing the friendship between a shipwrecked boy and an equally marooned horse, leading to their adventures back in America after a lucky rescue, it's not the kind of Disney-style winsome cuteness OD you'd expect. The cinematography deserves a special mention – the whole film looks absolutely gorgeous. But the plot is strong, as are the performances, and so long as you don't mind an absence of pyrotechnics this is a pretty spanking little number.



THE CRANBERRIES – DOORS AND WINDOWS

BY	POLYGRAM	PRICE	£19.99	RATING	★

They're big in America, which is reason enough to hate them, and now The Cranberries have decided that it's not bad enough you have to listen to their whiny "Oirish" nonsense, now you have to look at their pointless faces and bad suits as well. All very well for Cranberries fans, you may think – but not so. The live versions of various songs are pretty execrable (especially the atrocious readings of Zombie), and there just isn't enough "multimedia" activity to interest anyone who's ever read one interview with them. Stick to the audio albums if you must like The Cranberries.





next Month

CONTINUING OUR EXTENDED AM2 COVERAGE, WE'LL BE BRINGING YOU THE VERY FIRST REVIEW OF SEGA RALLY, ALONG WITH AN IN DEPTH FEATURE DETAILING EVERY ASPECT OF THE GAME. PLUS, THERE'LL BE PREVIEWS OF TOH SHIN DEN, LEGEND OF THOR, KING OF THE FIGHTERS '95, REVIEWS OF X-MEN CHILDREN OF THE ATOM, OFF WORLD INTERCEPTOR, WORLD CUP GOLF AND LOADS MORE. LIKE A VIRTUA FIGHTER 2 PLAYERS GUIDE, THE LOWDOWN ON VIRTUA FIGHTER 3, TIPS ON FIRESTORM. PLUS MORE THAT EVEN WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YET.

OH. AND THERE'S THE SMALL MATTER OF

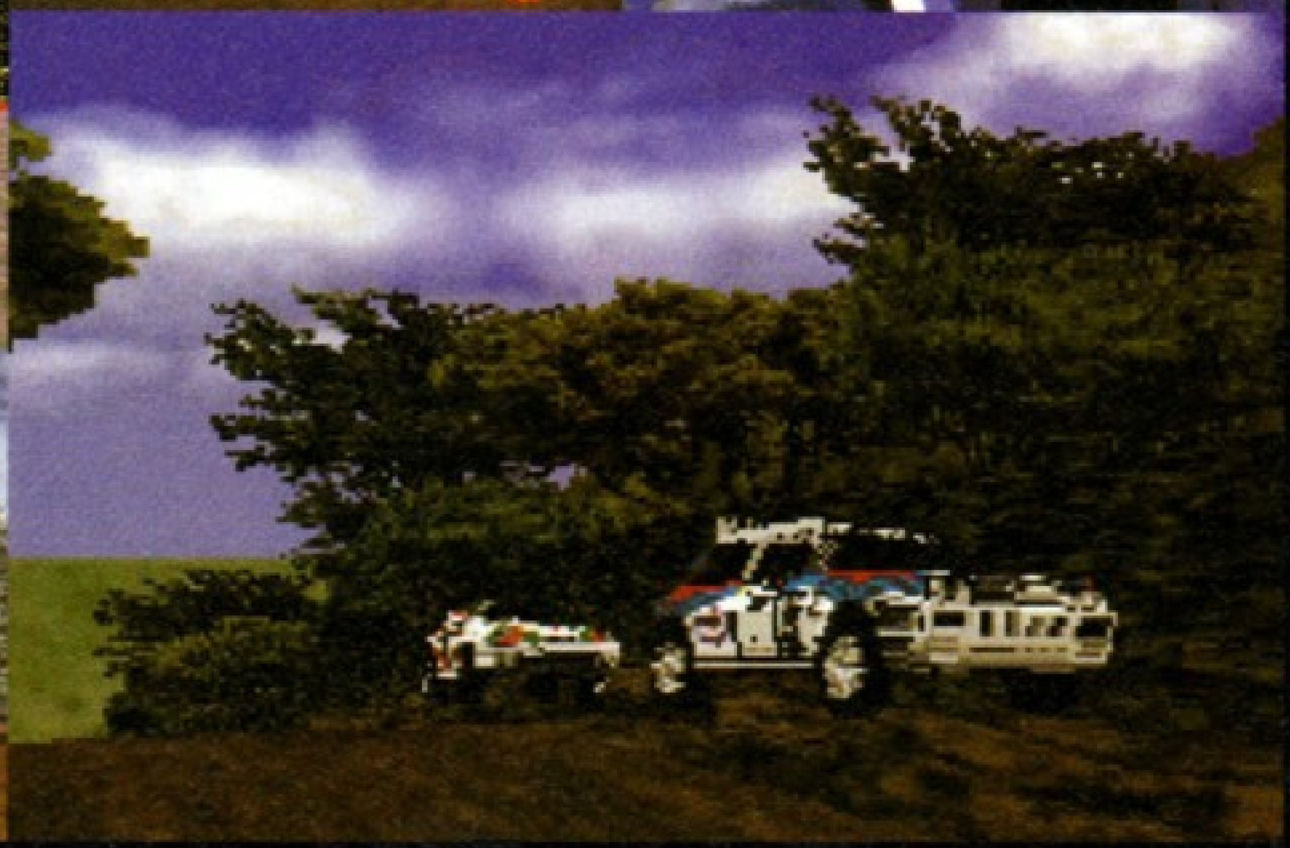
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SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. ISSUE 3. OUT DECEMBER 15.

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SPECIAL NO THANKS: To the person who kept us waiting around on deadline day. What a star!

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UK: £27.00
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PRINTING: COOPER CLEGG AND SPOTTYSWOODE BALLANTYNE

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